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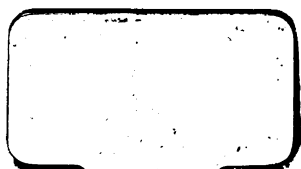
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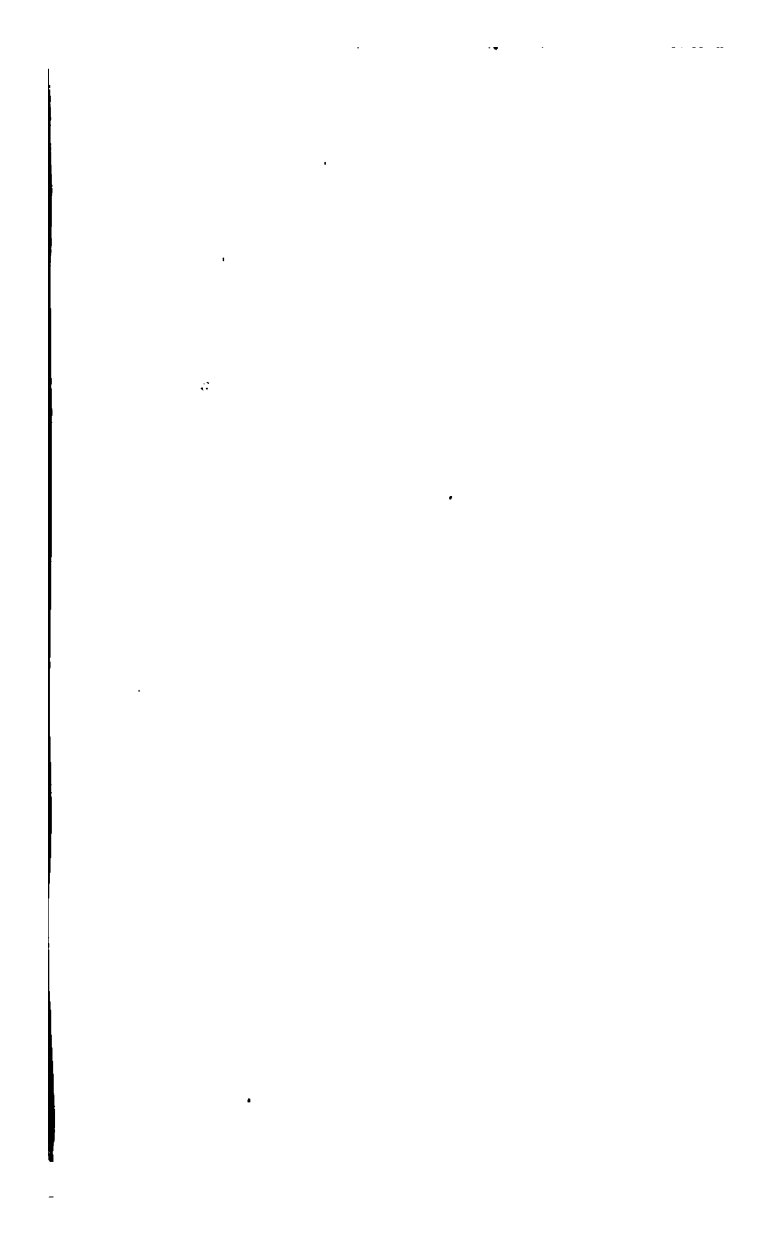
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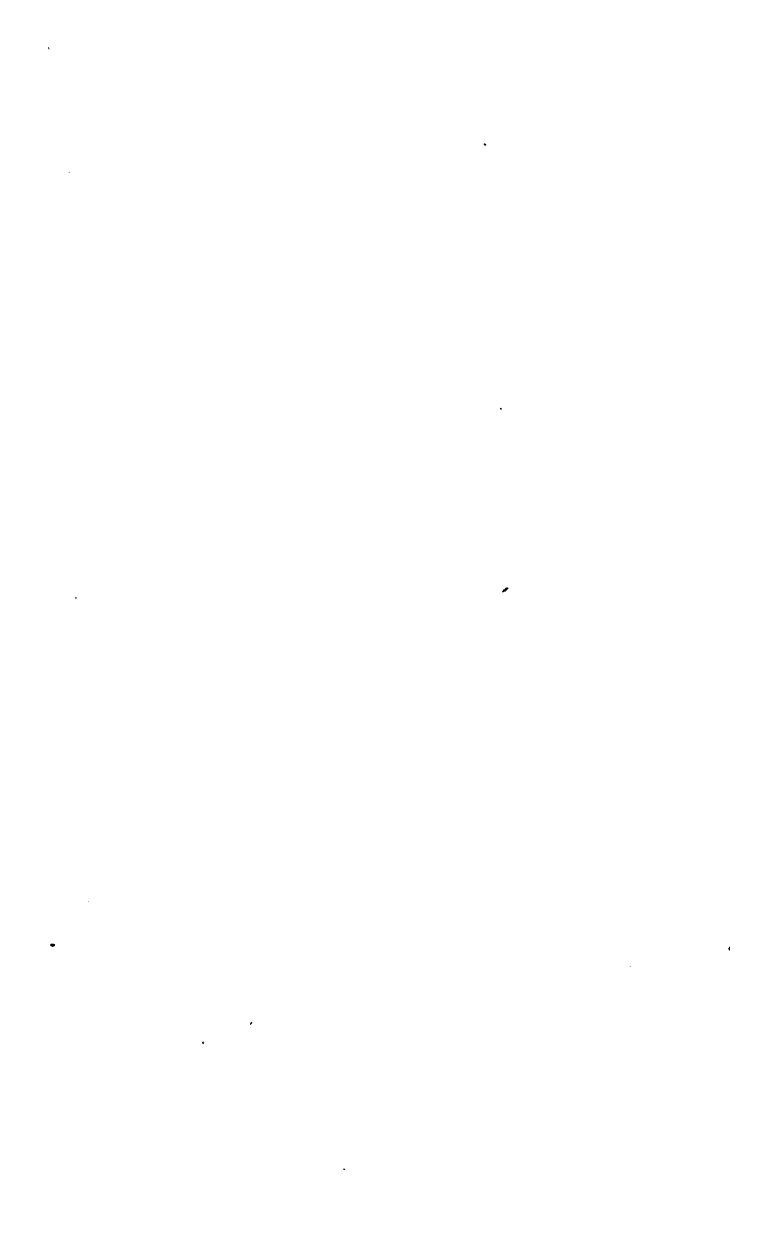
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**THE ARMENIAN CHURCH**

**ITS HISTORY**

**rites and ceremonies**

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**R. D. D<sup>r</sup>. JAMES ISSAVERDENS**

*Member of the Armenian Immigration and Assembly*

*of St. Lazarus at Venice*

— — — — —  
**VENICE**

**ARMENIAN MONASTERY OF ST. LAZARUS**

— — — — —  
**1877**

2452 + 2



**ARMENIA**

**A N D**

**THE ARMENIANS**



**ARMENIA**  
**AND**  
**THE ARMENIANS**

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**VOL. II.**  
**ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY**

**BY**  
**Rd. Dr. JAMES ISSAVERDENS**  
**MEMBER OF THE ARMENIAN INSTITUTION AND ACADEMY**  
**OF ST. LAZARO AT VENICE**

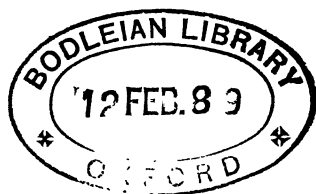


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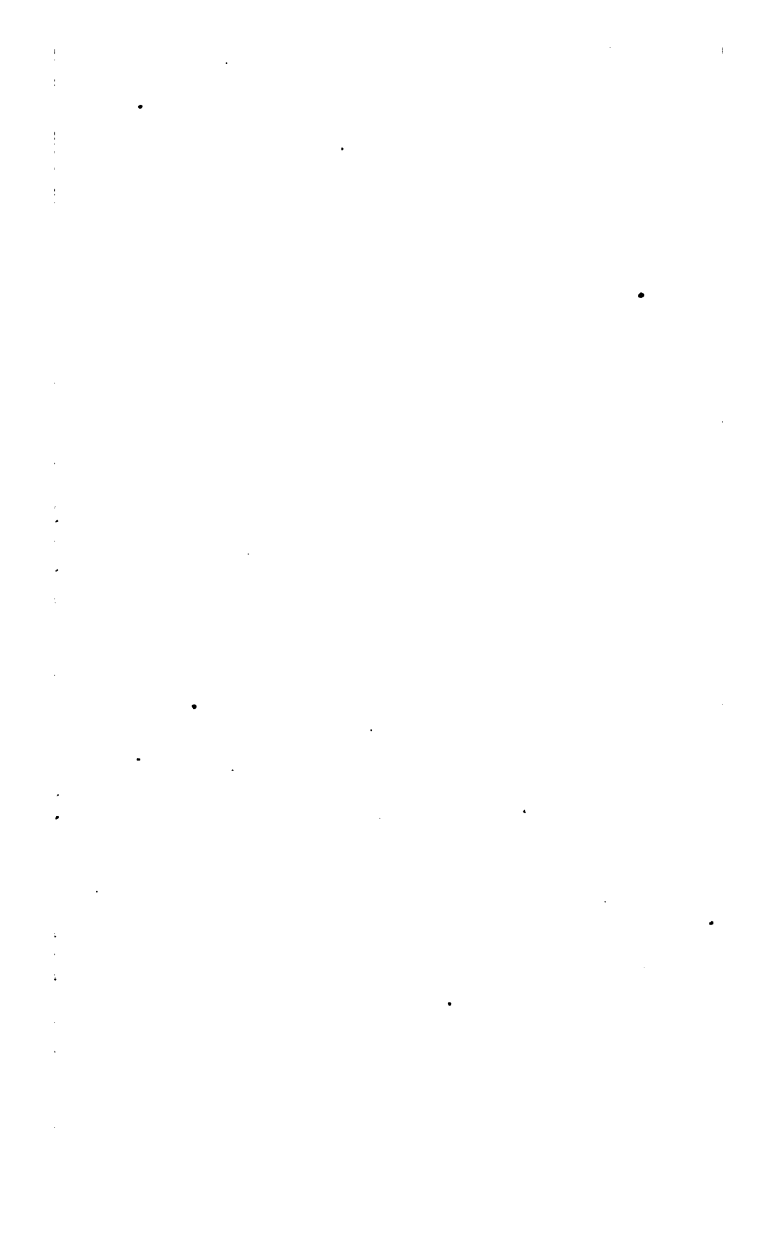
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We have already, in the second part of this work, briefly related how Christianity was first introduced into Armenia; the present volume is intended to give a separate and more complete historical sketch of the Armenian Church.



**ARMENIA AND THE ARMENIANS**

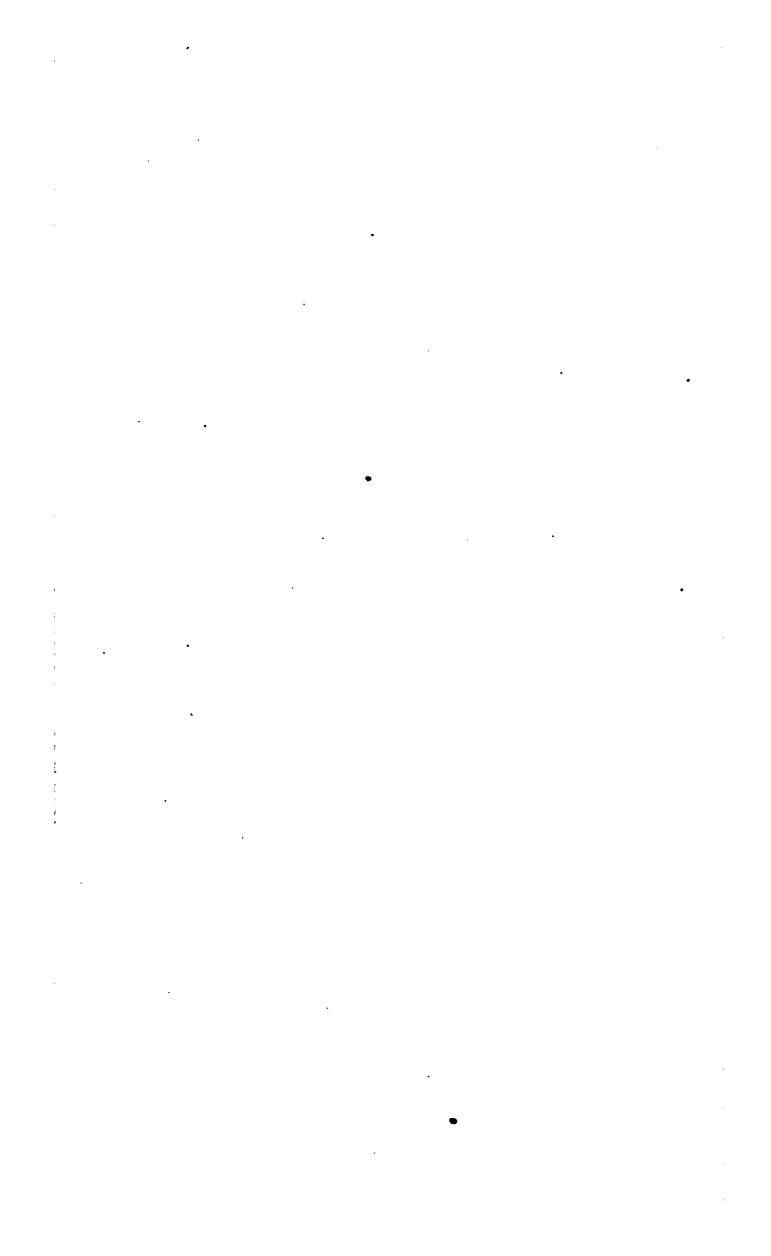
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**VOL. II.**

**PART THIRD**



**ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY**



# H I S T O R Y

## O F

### THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

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FIRST AND SECOND CENTURY.

#### I

Origin of Christianity in Armenia. — Abgar's Messengers to Marinus. — Abgar's letter to Jesus Christ. — Our Lord's answer. — His portrait. — Thaddeus the Apostle. — Prince Sanadrug.

The origin of Christianity in Armenia dates from the time of its king Abgar, who reigned at the beginning of the Christian era; he had his seat of government in the city of Edessa and was tributary to the Romans.

Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Judea, was hostile to king Abgar but was unable to injure him except by exciting the Romans against him; he therefore accused him falsely to the Emperor Tiberius of rebellious projects.

King Abgar on being made acquainted with this accusation, hastened to send messengers to the Roman general Marinus, then governor of Syria, Phœnicia and Palestine, for the purpose of vindicating himself. During their stay in Palestine these messengers — among whom was Anané, Abgar's confidant — hearing of the wonders that were wrought by our Saviour, determined to visit Jerusalem, in order to gratify their curiosity.

When therefore their mission was concluded, they proceeded thither and were filled with wonder at witnessing the miracles performed by Jesus our Lord. On returning to Armenia they related all the particular to their master. Abgar after having listened to their narrative, became satisfied that Jesus was the son of God, and immediately wrote to him as follows :

« Abgar, son of Arsham, to Jesus, the great Healer, who has appeared in the country of Judea at the city of Jerusalem — greeting.

Lord, — I have heard that thou dost not heal by medicines but only through the word; that thou makest the blind to see, the lame to walk; that thou cleanseest the lepers and makest the deaf to hear; that thou castest out devils, raisest the dead, and healest through the word only. No sooner

had the great miracles, that thou performest, been related to me, than I reflected and now believe that thou art God and the son of God, descended from heaven to perform these acts of beneficence. For this reason I have written thee this letter, to pray thee to come to me, that I may adore thee and be healed of my sickness by thee, according to my faith in thy power. Moreover I have heard that the Jews murmur against thee and seek to slay thee. I pray thee, therefore, come to me; I have a good little city, which is enough for both of us, and there we can peaceably live together.»

Abgar in sending his messengers, gave them instructions to offer sacrifices for him at the temple at Jerusalem. It is said also, that he sent with them a painter in order that if the Blessed Saviour would not come, he might at least possess a portrait of him. Greek historians, however, relate that the painter was the same Anané, the king's confident, who was skilful in painting.

The messengers on their arrival at Jerusalem, wished for an opportunity to see Christ; but not presuming to approach him, as the day happened to be that of His triumphal entry in Jerusalem, they applied to Philip, one of the Apostles, and said, « We wish to see Jesus to deliver our Master's

message to him. » Philip then, accompanied by Andrew, went to Jesus and acquainted him with the object of the messengers' visit. Jesus thereupon testified much joy and dictated the following reply which was written down by the Ap. Thomas.

« Blessed be he who believes in me without having seen me; for thus it is written of me: Those who see me shall not believe in me; and those who do not see me, they shall believe and be saved. In as much as you have written to me to go to you, know that it is necessary I should fulfil here all for which I have been sent. And when I shall have done so, I shall ascend to Him who sent me; and then I will send you one of my disciples, who shall remove your pain, and shall give life to you and those around you. »

It is related that the before-mentioned painter in seeking to take the features of our saviour, being unable to execute his design, on account of the multitude, was at last seen by our Lord, who causing him to approach, took a handkerchief, and passing it over his sacred face, miraculously impressed on it an admirable likeness of his countenance, and giving it to Anané, desired him to take it to his master, as a reward for his faith.



Abgar's messengers returning to Edessa presented our Lord's letter, together with his sacred likeness, to their Master. The king on receiving them was filled with joy, and reverentially causing them to be placed in meet custody, awaited the fulfilment of our Lord's promise.

After the Ascension, Thomas the Apostle, according to our Lord's desire, sent Thaddeus, one of the Seventy, to Abgar. On his arrival at Edessa, he went to one Tobias, a prince of the Pakradunian tribe and consequently a Jew by origin. This prince having received the Apostle in his house, became a believer in Christ. The Apostle then began to perform many miracles upon sick people, and his fame being spread throughout the city, reached king Abgar, who thereupon sent for the prince Tobias, and desired him to bring the Apostle to him. This was done, and Thaddeus being introduced to the king, instructed him in the faith and healed him of his sickness. He likewise miraculously healed many of the sick, and having instructed all the people of the city in the new doctrine, baptized them, together with the king and his Court. All the temples, dedicated to idols, were shut up, and a large Church was built. Thaddeus then created a bishop to rule the new congregation, selecting a silk-mercer, the king's cap-maker,

for that office and giving him the name of Addé.

It is related that upon the principal gate of Edessa, was placed the statue of a Greek idol, which, all who entered the city, were obliged to reverence. King Abgar ordered this to be taken away, and placed in its stead the sacred portrait of our Lord, with this inscription : *« Christ God, he who hopes in thee, is not deceived in his hope ; »* at the same time ordering all those who entered the city, to give it divine honour.

This conversion of king Abgar and of the Edessians took place in the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the Vulgar Era, or in the thirty third year after the birth of Christ.

Shortly after, Thaddeus, desiring to spread the light of the Gospel in other parts of the country, went to Inner Armenia to visit Sanadrug, who then resided in the province of Shavarshan or Ardaz. Sanadrug became a christian shortly after the arrival of the Apostle and was baptized, together with his daughter Santukht and a great number of the chiefs and common people. Here Thaddeus, also consecrated a bishop, named Zachariah, and then proceeded to Upper Armenia; but finding the people there unwilling to listen to his preaching, he left them and went to the country of the Aghuans.

Abgar, in his zeal for the faith he had

just embraced, wrote to the Emperor Tiberius in favour of Christ, informing him how the Jews unjustly crucified him, and exhorting him, at the same time, to believe and command also that others should adore the Saviour. Thus many letters passed between the two monarchs on the subject of his divine mission. He also wrote to Ardashes, king of Persia, and to his son Nerseh, the young king of Assyria, exhorting them to become believers in Christ. However, before he received replies to these, he died, in the third year of his conversion to Christianity.

## II

King Anané. — Martyrdom of the bishop Addé. — King Sanadrug. — Queen Helena. — Return of S. Thaddeus to Armenia. — Chrysos and his followers. — Martyrdom of S. Thaddeus.

On the death of king Abgar the kingdom was troubled by the pretensions of Sanadrug, his nephew, who proclaimed himself king of Armenia in the province of Shavarshan, while Anané, the son of the deceased monarch, ascended the throne of his father in Edessa.

The first acts of king Anané in assuming

the crown, were to apostatize from the faith he had so lately embraced, and to endeavour to persuade his people to follow his example. He reopened the temples, and publicly worshipped the idols which they contained. He projected the removal of the sacred likeness of our Saviour, which had been placed by king Abgar in a niche over the principal gate of the city.

But Addé, the bishop, being informed of the king's design, in company with some of the faithful, went by night to the spot, and covered the niche with a wall, thus endeavouring to turn the king's thoughts from the execution of his design. Anané then sent to Addé, directing him to make for him a diadem, as he had done before for his father. The bishop replied : « My hands shall never make a diadem for the head that bows not in adoration of Jesus Christ. » The king, incensed at this reply, immediately directed that the feet of the holy bishop be cut off. The executionner found Addé in the church preaching to the people, and immediately fulfilled the atrocious orders he had received from the king. The holy bishop died in consequence, and thus became the first christian martyred in Armenia.

At this period Anané began to repair his royal mansion at Edessa. Being present di-

recting the workmen who were placing a large marble pillar, it suddenly fell upon him and broke his legs, in consequence of which he died; thus was he punished for his savage barbarity towards the martyred bishop Addé.

Sanadrug, who reigned in Shavarshan, had also apostatized from Christianity. On being informed of the death of Anané, the late king, he immediately marched to Edessa. The people of the city, who were christians, alarmed at the news of the approach of Sanadrug, sent to him and offered to submit, if he would swear not to molest them in the exercise of their religion, nor commit any kind of violence on them. This oath Sanadrug took; but once in Edessa, he massacred all the males of the house of Abgar. He sent queen Helena, Abgar's relict, to Kharan, giving her the government of Mesopotamia, in return for the kindness he had received, through her, from his uncle. Queen Helena remained firm in the christian faith; highly endowed with the gifts of divine grace, she went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and a famine breaking out there, in the days of the Emperor Claudius, she sent for a large quantity of corn from Egypt, and distributed it to the poor. On her death she was interred with great pomp before one of the gates of Jerusalem, and having been re-

garded as a public benefactress, a magnificent mausoleum was erected over her remains.

When the news of the apostasy of Anané and Sanadrug reached Thaddeus, he was greatly grieved; and although he was then in Cesarea of Cappadocia, where he had erected several churches and appointed as bishop one Theophilus, he determined to return to Edessa again to preach the Gospel to Sanadrug. On his reaching the borders of Mesopotamia, he fell in with an embassy sent by the Romans to Sanadrug, composed of five persons, patricians, of whom the chief was called Chrysos. Thaddeus convinced them of the truth of Christianity, converted and baptized them, and conferred priest's orders on Chrysos. They then, giving up all their property, followed the Apostle and became preachers of the Gospel, and were known by the name of Followers of Chrysos. In the course of time each of these good men obtained the crown of martyrdom.

On the news of these conversions reaching Sanadrug, he invited Thaddeus to meet him in Shavarshan, where as soon as he arrived, he put him to death not sparing even his own daughter Santukht, who refused to apostatize from the faith she had learned from the holy Apostle. At her death

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many miracles were wrought, which were the cause of the conversion to Christianity of many of the heathens; among whom was a very celebrated chief, who being baptized, together with all his family, was called Samuel, and was put to death by order of the king. A princess of the name of Zarman-tukht became also a convert together with all her household, to the number two hundred persons; all of whom suffered death in consequence. As for Chrysos and his followers, they retired on the Dzaghgui mount near the source of the Euphrates, and devoted themselves to an ascetic life.

### III

**The Apostle Bartholomew and the portrait of the Virgin. — He erects a Nunnery. — Several conversions effected by him. — He is martyred. — The nuns. — Jude the Apostle. — Relics of the Apostle St. Thomas. — Some of the Seventy two disciples. — Chrysos and Sukias. — The martyrdom of Chrysos and his followers.**

At this time, A. D. 50, Bartholomew the Apostle came into Armenia, bringing with him the portrait of the Virgin Mary, of which portrait Moses of Khoren says, that « St. John the Evangelist having painted

the portrait of the holy Virgin upon cypress wood, when her last hour arrived, the Apostles prayed her to bless it, that it might be a consolation to them, and a means for healing the sick. The holy Virgin in fulfilment of their wish, placed the portrait upon her face, and then gave it to them as a remembrance. »

After the death of the holy Virgin, Bartholomew, who was not present at her last hour, coming to Jerusalem, was much grieved at not finding her still alive. He then prayed the other Apostles to permit him to open her tomb, that he might see her for the last time. Upon granting this request, they discovered that her assumption had taken place; and the Apostles, in order to comfort Bartholomew, gave him the portrait on cypress wood in accordance with his wish. This portrait the Apostle brought with him to Armenia, and arriving in the territory of the Antzevatzie, he wrought many miracles through the same; then having built a church near a river, and dedicated it to the Holy Virgin, he deposited the sacred relic therein, and on a mountain near by he erected a Cross.

He erected also near the church a nunnery calling it « The Convent of Souls, » appointing Mary, sister of a chief named Hussig, to be Abbess. Then the Apostle



preaching the Gospel in Lower Armenia, converted numbers to Christianity; among others Okohi or Takuhi, the sister of Sanadrug, with the principal officer of her household. Sanadrug on being informed of this, caused her to be seized and put to death. He also laid hands on Bartholomew, flayed him alive, and then crucified him in the city of Arevbanus, where his remains were interred.

Then Mary, the Superior of the Convent founded by Bartholomew, gave up the care of it to Anna her second, and crossing the river built a hut on a lonely spot, where she led a solitary life during the remainder of her days. Anna, her successor, shortly after following her example, ended her days in religious isolation. The other nuns, who were left behind in the convent, ended their lives some in austere seclusion, some by martyrdom. This Convent was, afterwards, rebuilt by St. Gregory the Illuminator, of whom it is recorded that he took the Cross erected by St. Bartholomew, and carried it with him wherever he went, by which means many miracles were performed. Afterwards this same Cross was placed upon the tomb of king Tiridates.

Jude, another of the Apostles, also came into Armenia, and was put to death in the city of Ormi where he was also buried. We

are also told, that some of the bones of the Apostle Thomas, who suffered in India, were brought into Armenia, and placed in the village of Hoghtz, in the province of Aghtznies.

At this time Eghishá, also a disciple of Thaddeus, who was ordained bishop by St. James the brother of our Lord, accompanied by three disciples came into Upper Armenia, where, by his preaching many converts to Christianity were made. He suffered martyrdom on the plain of Zartuni.

Eusthatius, one of the Seventy, came also to Armenia, and was put to death in Sunia, and his remains were interred in the place now called by his name Sdathev or Dathev.

Thus was Christianity introduced in Armenia, and such were its principal promoters, who, with their own blood, sealed the truth of the Gospel. On account of the apostasy of the king and of the chiefs, the nation again fell into idolatry, and the faithful few who remained firm in the new doctrines, were obliged to conceal their religion in order to avoid persecution.

King Sanadrug was succeeded by Erwant<sup>1</sup> and Erwant by Ardashes the Second. It was during his days. A. D. 92, and about forty three years after the death of St. Thad-

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Armen., p. 94.

deus, that Chrysos and his followers, who lived an ascetic life on the mount of Zaghgatz, and were grown very old, left their hermitage and went down to the city of Ardashad. There they preached the Gospel and their zeal was crowned with success. For some of the near relations of the queen, listening to their preaching, believed in Christ and were baptized. These were seventeen persons, who had accompanied queen Sathinig<sup>1</sup> from the country of the Aghuans, when she came a bride to king Ardashes. They all followed Chrysos into the wilderness, and adopted the life of hermits; their leader was named Sukias.

Some time after, Ardavazd, the eldest son of king Ardashes, having met them on the mountains, sought to induce Sukias and his followers, to leave the wilderness and return with him to the world; but they remained firm in their faith, which so enraged Ardavazd, that he caused Chrysos and his followers to be put to death.

Sukias and his followers were left unmolested, and after burying their murdered brethren remained in the wilderness, leading a life of austerity, their nourishment consisting of herbs. But willing to suffer yet more, they retired to an unfrequented

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Arm., p. 98.

mountain which was called afterwards by their name Sugav. Eventually, in the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, they suffered martyrdom.

In concluding the narrative of this first epoch of Christianity in Armenia, we may note that the first list of the saints, whom we yearly commemorate, is formed of those who suffered martyrdom from the date of king Abgar down to that of Sukias.

THIRD CENTURY.

I

Christians in Armenia during the time of king Chosroes. —  
Anag. — Gregory the Illuminator and his sons. — Tir-  
dates.

The seeds of the Christian faith, once being sown in Armenia through the preaching of the Apostles, took root so firmly, that no persecutions were able to eradicate them. It is recorded in the history of the nation, that in the time of king Chosroes the First, who reigned A. D. 214, many christians were scattered over the kingdom, who were subject to persecution, and many were put to death by order of the king because of their faith. Others were compelled to work in the erection of cities, towns, and villages, and other buildings which the king had undertaken.

Nevertheless the real history of the conversion of all Armenia to Christianity, begins with that of the public life of St. Gregory the Illuminator, who bore high the light of Truth in his country, and expelled thence for ever the darkness of idolatry.

We have related in the history of Armenia<sup>1</sup> how Anag, of the tribe of the Surenian Pahlavies, who resided in Persia, tempted by the bribe which was promised by Ardashir the Sassanian, usurper of the crown of Persia, undertook to assassinate Chosroes, the Armenian king.

Taking his family with him, Anag pretended to flee from Ardashir, and came to Armenia, feigning all the time to be persecuted by Persian troops. Chosroes being deceived, sent an escort to protect him. Thus Anag first arrived in the province of Ardaz, and resided for a short time in the very place where the remains of St. Thaddeus the Apostle were deposited.

It is said that here it was that Okohy, the wife of Anag, conceived her child, afterwards St. Gregory the Illuminator. Anag removed thence to the city of Vagharshabad, where the king Chosroes had fixed his residence; and here St. Gregory was born, in the year of our Lord 257. Anag seizing an opportunity, struck Chosroes to the heart and fled. But he was pursued by the soldiery and drowned in the river Arax. The troops then seized the family of Anag, and massacred every member of it, except St. Gregory, who

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Arm., p. 406.

was saved by his nurse Sophia, assisted by her brother Euthalius, both of whom were Christians and natives of Cesarea, whither they fled with him. He was there baptized and named Gregory.

When he attained the age of maturity, Sophia caused him to marry Mary, the daughter of one David a christian, of whom two sons were born named Vertanes and Arisdagues. After they had been married three years, they parted by mutual consent, and Mary entered a convent of nuns, where she died. Arisdagues, her younger son, afterwards became a monk; but Vertanes, the elder, took wife, by whom he had two sons, Gregoris and Hussig.

Ardashir, the usurper of the crown of Persia, being informed of the death of king Chosroes, entered Armenia and put all the members of the family of the murdered king to death, with the exception of the younger Tiridates and his sister Chosrovi-takht<sup>1</sup>.

Tiridates having grown to manhood, distinguished himself in the Roman Army; and St. Gregory hearing of his renown went to Rome, after he had parted from his wife, and obtained service near his person. This he did without disclosing his real name,

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Armen., p. 107.

and with the object in view of compensating by his services for the mischief his father had done to the prince's house.

When Tiridates was proclaimed king of Armenia, he proceeded to the province of Egueghiatz, where, in the town of Eriza, was a temple of the goddess Anahid, that is Diana daughter of Jupiter, whom the Armenians worshipped as the guardian of their country. There Tiridates offered sacrifices to the Goddess in gratitude for the many favours he thought he had received from her. There he invited Gregory to join him in his idolatry and offerings to the Goddess of crowns, branches and flowers. Gregory refused, saying that he only worshipped the God of heaven and earth.

Tiridates astonished at hearing this refusal, directed that Gregory should be kept in strict confinement. Then ordering him to be brought into his presence, and being unsuccessful in making him renounce Christianity he caused him to be tortured in twelve different modes. At length discovering that he was the son of Anag, the murderer of his father, he ordered him to be taken to the fortress of Ardashad and to be thrown into a deep pit, where it was the custom to throw criminals; there Gregory remained fourteen years, being sup-



ported all that time, through the mercy of the Lord, by the charity of a pious Christian woman.

Tiridates after many victories against the Persians, whom he drove from Armenia, ordered sacrifices to be every where offered to the Gods in thankfulness for the favours he had received from them. But being informed that there were many christians scattered over his kingdom, who would never conform to the wish of the king in offering sacrifices to idols, he ordered them to be persecuted, directing the governors of the provinces to torture them and to confiscate their property.

FOURTH CENTURY.

I.

The Ripsimians. — A divine punishment inflicted upon the king Tiridates and his people. — Chosrovitukht receives a divine revelation. — St. Gregory is released from the pit. — The relics of the Ripsimians. — The healing of the king and his people.

Now there was in Rome a convent of nuns, amongst whom was a young girl of great beauty, named Ripsimé. The abbess of the nunnery was called Kayané, a pious and worthy woman.

The Emperor Diocletian wishing to possess a handsome wife, sent people expressly in search of the comeliest woman in his empire. These men entered the convent by force, admired Ripsimé's angelic beauty, and painting her portrait, placed it before the Emperor. Diocletian was so much delighted with it that he immediately ordered the original to be brought to him, at the same time giving directions for the celebration of the nuptials.

But Kayané and the nuns, seeing the danger to which their pupil and their community were exposed, decided to leave

the convent immediately and to take refuge in foreign countries. They, therefore, in company with several pious priests, and to the number of more than seventy, went different ways toward the East, and scattered themselves over different localities. Kayané and Ripsimé, however, together with thirty five of their companions, took the direction of the province of Ararat and arrived near the city of Ardashad, where they took refuge in the vineyards, and settled themselves in a building which served to keep the vats for wine.

Diocletian seeing the failure of his plans and the disappointment of his hopes, instituted a search for the nuns; and hearing they were gone to Armenia, he wrote to Tiridates, directing that Ripsimé should be forwarded to Rome, unless he choose to retain her as his own wife.

Thereupon Tiridates ordered inquiries to be made, and shortly after the place was discovered where the nuns had taken refuge. Precautions were taken to prevent their escape, but the fame of the beauty of Ripsimé being spread about, the people of the neighbourhood crowded there to admire her; and the report being brought to the king, he ordered his men to bring her with great pomp to him. His wish was to marry her; but Ripsimé, being ex-

horted by Kayané to die rather than to deny Christ for the sake of terrestrial honours, would not go to the king; whereupon Tiridates ordered her to be brought by force. This was done, but the Virgin proved triumphant against the solicitations of the monarch; she being strengthened by divine power, fought and vanquished the king when he attempted to violate her. Tiridates though ashamed of being vanquished by a young girl, ordered Kayané to be brought, that she should exhort the Virgin to comply with the king's wish. But she, instead of fulfilling the order of the monarch, exhorted Ripsimé to keep herself pure and to despise the grandeur of this world. Then the king trying again, was again overcame by the Virgin; whereupon Ripsimé opening the doors, ran out and passing through the astonished guards, crossed the streets of the city and gained the country. She went directly to her companions and related to them all that had passed between her and the king. Then she retired to a high place and knelt down in prayer.

Tiridates ashamed and incensed at being repulsed by a girl, ordered Ripsimé to be tortured and put to death. The men sent by the king, proceeded to the place where Ripsimé was engaged in prayer, and there,

after inflicting upon her many dreadful tortures, they cut her body to pieces, thus putting an end to her sufferings. Her companions assembled to inter the body, but were arrested by the soldiery and put to death. They were in number thirty two. But one of them being sick, had remained in the wine press; she was killed on the spot by the soldiery. The bodies of these martyrs were thrown out on the fields as food for the beasts of prey.

The day after Tiridates ordered Kayané with her two companions to be put to death. Thus the number of these martyrs amounted to thirty seven. This occurred in the year 301 on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of October.

Shortly after the king and many of the chiefs and people of his household were visited by the wrath of God with a sore disease for their persecution of the saints. A general consternation prevailed among them and they ran about like mad people, possessed of devils.

While they were in this deplorable condition, the virgin Chosrovitukht, sister of the king, received a divine revelation; according to which she was ordered to send to Ardashad and to release Gregory from the pit; he would heal the king and all the people of their disease. But this seemed incredible to all; as it was fourteen

years since Gregory had been thrown into the pit, and he no doubt had died, like many others. Nevertheless the same vision having been repeated five times on the second day with threats, they were obliged to send to the spot one of the chiefs named Oda; who proceeding with his men to Ardashad, went to the pit and found that Gregory was really still alive. He was taken out of the pit and brought immediately to Vagharshabad, where the chiefs awaited the fulfilment of the vision.

They were all overjoyed on seeing the saint so miraculously preserved during so many years; and the king, as well as the chiefs, prostrating themselves before him besought him to pardon them all the mischief they had caused him. But the saint comforting them exhorted them to acknowledge their creator, who only was able to redeem them. Then he asked them where they had put the bodies of the Martyrs; and on their being astonished, not knowing to what he referred, he said: the saints whom you killed for their belief in God. Then they brought him to the place where the bodies of the martyrs were thrown, and they saw that after nine days and nights of exposure the holy relics had suffered no injury.

He then collected the bodies of the saints and transported them to the wine-press.

There establishing himself, he ordered the king and all those who suffered, as well as the people, to fast five days and to recommend themselves to the mercy of God. Then for sixty consecutive days, he, in the same place preached the gospel, instructing them about the Creation, the Holy Trinity, the incarnation of the Word, and explaining to them what the Prophets and the Apostles had said of Christ.

On the sixty sixth day, the king and all the people besought him earnestly to heal them from the disease of which they suffered; for they could not depart from the presence of the saint without being tormented by the devils. St. Gregory, however, before healing wished them to build a place for the repose of the bodies of the saints, through whose intercession God would pardon them their sins and heal them. And forthwith he related to them a vision he had in the same place, in which he saw the son of God coming down from heaven.

Thereupon the king and the Nobles and all the people, helped St. Gregory in the construction of three chapels, where were deposited the relics of the saints, each of whom was placed in a separate coffin and sealed with the sign of the cross. Then they enclosed with a wall the place where St. Gregory had seen the vision, that they

might there build a church in due time. There they also erected the sign of the Cross before which all the people prostrating themselves, worshipped. And the people being continually enlightened by the preaching of St. Gregory, believed in the true God.

Beholding this St. Gregory ordered them to kneel down and to pray to the merciful God to heal them. Which the people having done, he also prayed to God for them, and suddenly a miraculous healing was produced, and the king, the chiefs and all who suffered of the disease, were overjoyed to see themselves free from their sufferings.

Then Gregory and Tiridates began to exterminate idolatry in Armenia; they destroyed temples, statues, and idols throughout the land wherever they found them, the people assisting them in the work and becoming faithful to Christ.



## II

St. Gregory is elected to be spiritual head of the Armenians. — His journey to Cesarea and his consecration. — The relics of St. John. — St. Gregory returns to Armenia. — King Tiridates and his Court are baptized. — Etchmiadzin is built. — Festivities. — Arisdagues appointed vicar. — St. Gregory and Tiridates go to Rome. — St. Gregory is appointed by Pope St. Silvester High Pontiff of the Armenians.

After having preached the Gospel throughout Armenia, and having performed many miracles in destroying the idols, St. Gregory, together with the king and the chiefs, returned again to the city of Vagharshabad, the seat of Government. There Gregory advised the king to choose some one for their spiritual head, that he should baptize them and unite them in one family in the Church.

Thereupon an assembly was held by the king and the chiefs, and all agreed in electing Gregory for their spiritual head. He, however, would not accept at first, arguing his unworthiness; but at last he was obliged to conform to the desires of the people.

Immediately preparations were made and he was conveyed to Cesarea to be ordained bishop of Armenia by Leontius Metropolitan of that city.

Gregory entered Cappadocia and arrived at Cesarea, and was brought to the presence of the blessed Leontius by his escort, composed of fifteen among the most illustrious chiefs of Armenia. They brought Leontius a letter from king Tiridates, in which he related to the holy bishop all that had passed between him and all the Armenians, and besought him to lay hands upon Gregory and ordain him bishop of Armenia.

Leontius overjoyed at this news, immediately united his bishops, and ordained Gregory Archbishop of Armenia. This occurred in the year 302. He then presented him with some relics of St. John the Baptist and of the bishop Athanagenes, and sent him back to Armenia with great honour. Gregory brought with him from Cesarea, according to the recommendation of Leontius, two monks named Antonius and Chronides, together with their disciples, in order that he might erect monasteries and found the monastic system in Armenia. In the same way, passing through Sebastia, Gregory invited many learned christians to go to Armenia with him, where being ordained priests, they assisted him in preaching the gospel.

Then Gregory entered Armenia preaching the Gospel, baptizing the people of the country and erecting churches every where.

King Tiridates being made acquainted with the return to Armenia of Gregory, in company with queen Ashkhen and his sister Chosrovitukht, and his troops, went to meet him. He stopped in the province of Pakrevant, where, after one month, he was joined by Gregory in the city of Pakavan. There Gregory again instructed the king and his retinue in the christian doctrines, and after ordering them to fast, he baptized the king, his Court and thousands of the people in the river Euphrates, giving to the king the name of Johannes, in honour of St. John the Baptist. Then returning to Vaglarshabad, to the seat of the Government, Gregory began to build the Church of Etchmiadzin, on the very spot where he had seen the vision, and which he had already surrounded with a wall. He thenceforward ordered a yearly commemoration to be held, which is done to the present day on the eve of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin. In the same way he ordered many other festivities and commemorative days of Saints, namely of the Virgin, of the Ripsimians, Kayanians, St. John the Baptist and other saints, whose intercession the Armenian Church diligently invokes in performance of the wise regulations of St. Gregory the Illuminator.

Then St. Gregory, in company with the king, proceeded to the other provinces of

the kingdom, every where administering the holy baptism, destroying the remains of idolatry, building churches and ordaining bishops and priests to instruct the people. In the mean time he erected also convents, nunneries, hospitals and schools, appointing teachers for the purpose of preparing those worthy for the service of the church. According to the writings of national historians, the number of bishops ordained by St. Gregory in Armenia, amounted to more than four hundred; and the number of the priests was also immense. In this way he diffused the light of the Gospel throughout the land, being assisted by king Tiridates who endeavoured by every means to assist him.

Now Gregory having put his church in order, began to retire frequently to solitary places for the purposes of devotion and fasting. This he renewed so often and for such periods, that the king could not endure his absence, and therefore prayed him to remain near him. On Gregory's being unwilling to do this, the king requested him to ordain one of his two sons, who were in Greece, as Vicar, who should remain permanently near the person of the king. On Gregory's consenting, they sent for the two sons; Arisdagues, who was a hermit, reluctantly came and was ordained bishop, in the year 313. Gregory took Arisdagues with

him and set out on a tour through the country visiting carefully his people.

In the course of a short time news reached Armenia that the Emperor Constantine was a convert to Christianity; whereupon Tiridates and St. Gregory undertook a journey to Rome, A. D. 315, to visit him. On their arrival at Rome, they were received with great honours by the Emperor Constantine and St. Silvester; an alliance between the two nations was solemnly agreed upon, and Gregory was consecrated by St. Silvester, High Pontiff of all Armenia.

After a stay of one month in Rome, they set out on their return to Armenia. Gregory was presented by St. Silvester, with the left arm of the Apostle Andrew, and also with that of Luke the Evangelist, as well as with some relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and of other Saints. On their arrival in Armenia, Gregory built a church and a Monastery at the foot of Mount Taurus, where he placed the holy relics, and appointed twelve monks and a bishop named Eliazar, for its service; the place was called Eliazar's, and also, the Apostles' Monastery.

### III

**The Council of Nice. — The First National Council. — The addition made by St. Gregory to the Nicean Creed. — Death of St. Gregory. — His remains. — Arisdagues. — Vertanes. — St. Jacob of Nisibis. — St. Gregoris Pontiff of the Aghvaus. — Death of king Tiridates. — Queen Ashkhen and Khosrovitukht. — Death of the Pontiff Vertanes.**

In the year 325, the famous Council of Nice was held, to which the Emperor Constantine invited Tiridates with St. Gregory to assist. They, however, being prevented from going, sent St. Arisdagues in their stead, who was received with great honour by the bishops of the Council as a holy man and as son of a Confessor. He, after the conclusion of the Council, took copies of the Creed of the Fathers and the twenty Canons established by the Council, and returned to Armenia. St. Gregory immediately assembled his bishops in the city of Vagharshabad and held the first National Council, in which he read the Nicean Creed and the Canons. The council accepted the decisions of the Council of Nice, and St. Gregory admitting the Creed, added to it the following prayer :

« As for us, we glorify Him who was be-

fore all ages, adoring the Holy Trinity and the only Divinity of the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost, now and through world without end <sup>1</sup>. »

This prayer is recited up to the present day in Divine service at the end of the Nicean Creed.

After this event, in the year 331, St. Gregory withdrew himself from all intercourse with men, and retiring into Upper Armenia, took up his abode in a cavern in Mount Sebu. Here he lived, more like an heavenly spirit than a creature of Earth, until his departure from this life to inherit the reward of the righteous. He superintended the Armenian Church during a period of thirty years.

His body was found by some shepherds, who buried it in the same spot raising thereon a heap of stones. There it lay unknown for a few years, when it was discovered by a hermit named Karnig, who, it is said, was directed to the spot by divine revelation. His remains were then placed in Thortan; but afterwards they were transported to the city of Vagharshabad. There they remained a long time, when they were transferred to Duin; but afterwards his remains were spread here and there over the country as

<sup>1</sup> Liturgy, p. 43.

relics, some were carried to Constantinople and thence to Naples, where they are preserved in the Church and Convent which was built on purpose and is called San Li-gorio or Gregorio Armeno.

After St. Gregory's death, A. D. 332, Arisdagues, his younger son, occupied the pontifical chair. He governed the Armenian Church with prudence and zeal; he built a number of churches and convents, and made many laudable improvements in the spiritual welfare of the people. He was unremittingly zealous in the discharge of his functions, admonishing without distinction the prince and the peasant, when their conduct was blameable. One of the Armenian chiefs, called Archelaus, styled prince of the Fourth Armenia, having been admonished by Arisdagues on account of his aversion to him, was so much incensed, that waylaying the Pontiff while on his way to the province of Zops, he killed him. His body was conveyed to the province of Egueghiatz and buried in the village of Thil, which had been given by Tiridates to St. Gregory. Arisdagues presided over the Church in Armenia seven years.

Vertanes, his brother, succeeded him, A. D. 339. He was a man of uncommon piety, wisdom and zeal, and ever on the alert to improve the state of his church. It is related



of him that being desirous of introducing in the Armenian churches, the ceremonies of the church of Jerusalem, Vertanes sent to Macarius, the patriarch of that city, for information thereupon. The latter having held a synod, wrote to Vertanes and furnished him with eight canons, which although their authenticity be contested by some, we think worthy of resuming here :

1. *Deacons may not administer the sacrament of baptism ; if however they have, through ignorance or following local customs done so, they are guiltless ; but if henceforward they dare do so, they shall be punished.*

2. *The baptismal font shall be erected in the church where baptisms ought to take place. If, however, the minister finds the place unprovided with a church or baptismal font, he may baptize without them by immersing thrice.*

3. *Church ministers shall every where and especially in church, comport themselves respectfully, and in an orderly manner maintaining each his due rank.*

4. *The holy oil, i. e. the holy Chrism, shall be blessed by the High Pontiff ; but if in consequence of the distance of a place, there be no possibility of carrying it thither, then by order of the Pontiff, a bishop, assisted by two or at least by one other bishop, may bless it. The oil, however, for the use*

*of the Catechumen, and that for the sick, shall be blessed by the priest.*

*5. No one conscious of unrepented sin, nor any one of weak faith, shall dare approach the sacrament of Eucharist.*

*6. During the celebration of Mass members of other communions may not be present.*

*7. Newly made bread and unmixed wine shall be brought by the deacons to the Altar, for the priest to bless and make use of in the sacrament.*

*8. The Altar shall be furnished with a curtain; a curtain shall likewise hang down before the sanctuary, within which only the ministers celebrating the Mass may enter: the other ministers present shall take their stations outside it, each according to his rank.*

At this period St. Jacob, patriarch of Nisibis, cousin of St. Gregory, and son of Chosrovitukht sister of Anag, was much famed for his wisdom and sanctity. Many miracles were wrought by him, and even the dead were restored to life, it is said, through his prayers. He was one of the members of the Council of Nice where he was much honoured by the Fathers and also by the Emperor Constantine. St. Vertanes wrote him a letter asking information upon prayer, faith and other subjects. St. Jacob

thereupon, composed for him eighteen treatises, which contain most excellent doctrine.

St. Vertanes, after this, agreeably to the wish of king Tiridates, consecrated his eldest son Gregoris archbishop, and sent him amongst the Aghuans, where he became an example to all of sanctity and virtue. But not long after he was martyred there, the Aghuans being unwilling to modify their conduct in accordance with his admonitions. It is supposed that from this mission the pontificate among the Aghuans must have originated.

In the mean time, notwithstanding the zealous labour of St. Vertanes, many of the Armenian chiefs became relax in the observance of their christian duties, by taking concubines and committing other indecencies. Tiridates and Vertanes endeavoured to make them desist from their iniquity, and to lead a life consistent with the purity of the christian faith: but perceiving the inefficacy of their exhortations, and that the chiefs daily departed from the paths of virtue, the king became disgusted and retired from the government. He secluded himself in the same cavern, on Mount Sebu, formerly occupied by St. Gregory, he there lived a life of the greatest mortification and self-denial, wholly devoting himself to the worship of his Creator and the Blessed Sav-

iour. The chiefs, however, endeavoured to induce him to return, promising to amend their lives. On his refusal, they poisoned him out of revenge. His remains were interred in the fortress of Ani. They attempted also to kill St. Vertanes, but when they attempted to execute their bloody design, their hands, it is said, were withheld by an invisible power, and the bishop passed through them unhurt. He retired to his village of Thil, and there remained.

As for queen Ashkhen, the consort of king Tiridates and Chosrovitukht his sister, they retired to the city of Karny, to the residence built expressly for them by him. Here they lived a life of peace, devotion and mortification, and in due time were called away to God. They were counted among the Saints, and their memory is yearly celebrated in the Armenian church.

St. Vertanes, the Great pontiff, having lived a life of the greatest holiness, and governed the church of Armenia for a period of more than fifteen years, died, and according to his desire, was buried in the village of Thortan, in the year 355.

#### IV

Hussig. — Julian the Apostate. — Daniel. — The two sons of Hussig. — Parnersch. — Nierses. — The Council of Ashdishad and the improvements introduced by St. Nierses in the government of the Church. — He is consecrated by the Armenian bishops High Pontiff of the Armenians.

Vertanes was succeeded in the pontifical chair by his youngest son Hussig. During the life of his father Hussig had married the daughter of Diran <sup>1</sup>, who at this time was king of Armenia. He had by his wife two sons named Bab and Athanakines. For a long time previous to the death of the late Pontiff, Hussig had secluded himself from the world, leading a life of the severest mortification. He was universally esteemed for his intimate acquaintance with the holy Scriptures; and the fame of his sanctity was so great, that at the death of his father he was unanimously appointed his successor.

Julian the Apostate being at this time Emperor at Constantinople, declared war against Shabuh the Persian king. He was assisted in his expedition by Diran to whom,

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Arm., p. 113.

as a mark of his favour and esteem, he gave his portrait, on which were represented also figures of devils, requesting him to place it on the eastern side of the church in the Armenian metropolis. Diran, to comply with the wish of the Apostate, was in the act of hanging the picture with his own hands, when Hussig the Pontiff arrived on the spot, and exhorted him to desist from so horrible an abomination. But the king persisting in his design, the holy pontiff unable any longer to restrain his indignation, snatched the picture from the hands of the king, and throwing it on the ground, trampled it to pieces. Diran, fearing that Julian would attribute this to disrespect on his part, and that he would, consequently, be visited with the Emperor's vengeance, in a fit of violent rage caused Hussig to be seized and scourged so severely that he expired under the punishment. His pontificate lasted six years. His remains were interred near those of his father in the village of Thortan.

The Armenians then appointed to the pontifical chair an old man named Daniel, a Syrian, and disciple of St. Gregory, by whom he had been consecrated priest. His sway, however, lasted a very short time; for being brought to the presence of the king, he thought proper to admonish him

for the unjust death of Hussig. The king being incensed, ordered him immediately to be strangled. His body was taken, by his disciples, to the convent to which he had formerly belonged, called the Garden of Hatzies (ash-trees), and there buried.

The Armenians then wished to appoint a descendant of their Illuminator to the office of Pontiff; none, however, of that family was found fit for the station. Hussig had indeed left two sons, Bab and Athanakines, but both of them were addicted to vicious habits. So great, however, was the veneration of the people for the memory of St. Gregory, that they hoped for a change in the conduct of his two unworthy descendants, and therefore, in order to be able to choose one of them, they caused them both to be ordained deacons. It was soon evident that their reformation was hopeless, for they became more and more irregular, until they were punished for their impiety by a visitation of the anger of the Almighty, being, as it is said, consumed by fire from heaven.

Athanakines left one son named Nierses, who proved worthy of his descent from the good St. Gregory. He was sent into Cesarea at a very early age, and there carefully instructed in the fear of the Lord. He made a rapid progress in Greek litera-

ture, and having afterwards gone to Constantinople, he continued his studies with still greater profit. It was at this city that he married the daughter of a great prince named Aspiones. On the death of his father and uncle, the Armenians invited him to return amongst them; but in consequence of delay in complying with their desires, they appointed one Parnerseh or Paren to be Pontiff, in the year 362. This individual was a priest from the convent of St. Johannes Garahied, in the city of Ashdishad. He enjoyed the dignity three years when he died, in the second year of king Arshag the Second.

Then the king and the chiefs together elected Nierses, the son of Athanakines to the pontifical dignity, and as he resided still at Constantinople, they sent a deputy to him, renewing the former invitation. Nierses complying with the wish of the people, hastened to Armenia and was conducted to Cesarea where he was invested with the pontifical dignity. It is related that on his consecration, the Holy Ghost appeared resting over him in the form of a dove.

Immediately after he had assumed the government of the Armenian church, he introduced into it various regulations which he had seen in use at Constantinople, and



renewed the ancient and impressive ceremonies, which, in the preceding pontificates, had been permitted to fall into disuse. Many irregularities having also crept into the forms of public worship, he convened a large assembly in the city of Ashdishad, in the year 365, to which all the bishops of the country and many of the principal chiefs were invited. In this assembly every thing objectionable was condemned and expunged, and the whole established on a new and sound footing. In conformity with the decisions of the assembly, he erected more than 2000 convents, and appointed, as superintendents over them, Shaghida, a good and just man, the disciple of St. Daniel, with Epiphan, Ephraim and Kint Seghguny, all of them worthy servants of our Lord.

He also built asylums for widows and orphans, inns for the accommodation of strangers, with numerous hospitals and almshouses, for the support of which the cities and villages were charged. Over these establishments he placed governors, and the whole were put under the immediate superintendence of his deacon, whose name was Khat, a native of the village of Marak, in the province of Garin.

At that time it was the practice among the chiefs to marry their near relations in

order to secure the immunity of the privileges in their families. This St. Nierses prohibited under punishment of excommunication.

Thus St. Nierses was unremittingly employed in furthering the welfare of his church, the whole of his time being taken up in visiting the cities, villages, churches, convents, and hermitages, throughout the kingdom.

## V

St. Nierses mediator of peace between king Arshag and Theodosius. — He anathematizes king Arshag. — St. Nierses proceeds to Constantinople. — His banishment and release. — Assistance granted by the Greeks to the Armenians. — The Council of Vagharshabad. — Death of St. Nierses.

In the year 366, the Emperor Valentinian having been offended by king Arshag in the person of his ambassadors, sent Theodosius with a large Army to invade Armenia. King Arshag being afraid of the consequences of the invasion, applied to St. Nierses for assistance. The saint thereupon, accompanied by several holy and eminent persons, went to meet Theodosius whom he persuaded to suspend hostilities until he should re-

ceive further orders from the Emperor. Nierses then proceeding to Constantinople, obtained an interview with Valentinian and succeeded in appeasing him. The Emperor being pleased with the Saint, granted him all his wishes, treated him with great respect, and sent him back to Armenia.

After this event Arshag's conduct became worse and worse. He not only gave orders to strangle his father Diran and to kill Kuenel <sup>1</sup>, his own relation, but even married Parantzem, the wife of the murdered Kuenel, although his queen Olympias was still in existence. St. Nierses noting this criminal conduct and seeing that his admonitions were of no use, anathematized the king, and quitting the city of Vagharshabat, he retired to a convent where he lived in retirement. He, however, was again obliged to lend his assistance to Arshag; for the Armenian king, finding himself again in danger between his rebellious chiefs and an invasion of the Greeks, earnestly besought the saint to assist him. St. Nierses on the reiterated entreaties of Arshag, at length consented to be the mediator between him, the Armenian chiefs and the Emperor. First he pacified the chiefs, and then he proceeded to Theodosius, General of the

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Arm., p. 118.

Greeks, whom he entreated to desist from his intention of ravaging the country. Theodosius complied with the Saint's prayer, and on his return to Constantinople, earnestly begged the holy man to accompany him. St. Nierses consenting, Khat his deacon, whom he had lately consecrated bishop of Pakrevant and Arsharunians, was appointed to preside over the Church during his absence.

Theodosius having thus peaceably settled the question with king Arshag, set out on his return to Constantinople; where, on arriving, he informed the Emperor Valens of all he had done, presented him a letter from the Armenian king, and several hostages he had brought from Armenia. He also wished to introduce the Pontiff Nierses to the Imperial presence; but the Emperor being extremely angry on account of the treaty of peace Theodosius had concluded with the Armenian king, refused to read the letter. Neither would he see St. Nierses, but ordered him to be immediately banished, and the hostages to be put to death. Theodosius however interceding, the hostages were spared, but for the Armenian Pontiff there was no commutation. The blessed saint was, forthwith, placed on board ship, in order to be conducted to the spot appointed for his exile. It was the winter

season and the ship had not proceeded far, when a violent storm arose which cast them away on a desert island. Although the vessel went to pieces on striking land, yet the holy Nierses and the crew succeeded in getting safe ashore. They found the island extremely barren, affording no nourishment fit for man. They were obliged at first to eat the roots of the trees which grew there; but by the providence of God, in a short time, the sea threw such abundance of fish upon the dry land, that during the eight months they resided there they were never in want. Some time afterwards St. Nierses obtained his liberty.

In the mean time political affairs in Armenia were in the most deplorable state<sup>1</sup>. King Arshag was a prisoner in Persia; queen Parantzem and several of the chiefs, had been carried away by order of Shabuh, king of Persia. A great number of the chiefs, had taken refuge in Greece, and the country was devastated by the apostate Merujan.

St. Nierses becoming aware of this sad condition of his country, solemnly, entreated the General Theodosius to grant his assistance and to raise Bab, the son of Arshag, who was a hostage in Constantinople,

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Arm., p. 129.

to be king of Armenia. Theodosius, there-upon referred the question to the Emperor at Constantinople, who complying with the prayer of the Armenian Pontiff, invested Bab with the ensigns of royalty, gave him Greek troops, and sent him to Armenia. The Persians were quickly driven out, and Bab restored to the throne of his father to the great joy of all the Armenians.

Immediately after this, St. Nierses convened a third assembly at Vagharshabad, in the year 373, composed of all the chiefs, and princes of Armenia, with the bishops and other dignitaries of the church, at which a solemn covenant was made, that every one should henceforward lead a life of righteousness and peace.

Bab, however, was one of the first who disregarded its observance; he abandoned himself to indulgence and debauchery, and vices of the worst description became his ruling passion. Nierses much afflicted at this change in the king's habits, endeavoured to lead him back to the paths of virtue. The king instead of mending his ways, was incensed at being continually admonished by the Saint, and therefore he caused him to be secretly poisoned in the village of Khakh, in the province of Egueghiatz. Thus was the most brilliant light of the church extinguished, after illuminating it

for a period of eight years, though some writers erroneously say twenty, and some thirty four years.

Just before his death the holy Pontiff foretold many important events, according to a vision which he had while in exile. He declared that after the lapse of fifty years, the pontificate would never more be possessed by the posterity of St. Gregory, and that in future, the kingdom would be troubled by the incursions of the tribes of Archers. In like manner he foretold that at the end of seven hundred years the Armenian chiefs would be subdued and fall under the authority of the Greeks, etc. It is related, that, on this mournful event, Shaghida the Syrian, and Epiphan the Greek, disciples of old St. Daniel, who lived as hermits, the former on a mountain called Arewdz, the latter on a hill named the Throne of Anahid or Diana, formerly sacred to the heathen Gods, both beheld St. Nierses surrounded by a host of angels, ascending with glory into heaven. The sight afforded them infinite joy, and subsequently meeting, each told the story of his vision to the other. Finding that the time at which they beheld it corresponded with that of the Saint's decease, they reported the circumstance in all parts of the kingdom.

Nierses left one son, named Isaac, resi-

ding at the time of his father's death at Constantinople, where he perfected himself in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and of the different sciences, and eventually, as we shall see, became Pontiff.

## VI

Shahag. — Zaven. — Asburagues. — Isaac the Parthean. —  
The Urn containing the relics of the Ripsimians. — St.  
Mesrob.

Shahag of the family of Albianus, bishop of Hark, born in the city of Manazguerd in the province of Abahunies, succeeded Nierses in the pontificate; he was a good man, eminent for every virtue, and well worthy the high office to which he was elected. He was raised to the pontifical dignity through king Bab, who, observing the general mourning throughout the nation on the death of Nierses, procured the nomination of Shahag, on account of the universal reverence and esteem in which he was held. This Pontiff having presided over the church for two years, or according to other information, four years, died, A. D. 375, and was succeeded by Zaven, also of the family of



Albianus, who died a year, or according to other accounts, four years afterwards.

Asburagues, a relation of the last Pontiff, then assumed that dignity, and died in the third, or as some state, in the fifth year of his pontificate.

On the death of Asburagues, Isaac the Parthean was appointed Pontiff of the Armenians A. D. 389, with the consent of king Chosroes and of the whole Armenian nation. He was the son of the Pontiff Nierses the Great, and consequently a descendent of St. Gregory. According to the old chronicles he was a mirror of every virtue, a great preceptor of the church, and one whose exemplary character formed an admirable contrast to the pride and licentiousness of the other nobles of the kingdom.

Being educated in Constantinople, he was versed in the Greek language and literature, and during his abode there had married and had one daughter called Anush. But after the death of his wife, he secluded himself from the world and gave himself up to a life of sanctity and devotion, which example was followed by sixty of his disciples.

Now, a short time after the elevation of Isaac to the pontifical dignity, several of the chiefs, who were at enmity with Chos-

roes, finding that the Saint had been appointed without any reference to king Shabuh, seized the pretext and accused their king to the Persian monarch of meditating rebellion against the Persians, and therefore had appointed Isaac Pontiff of the Armenians without asking the consent of the Persian monarch.

Thereupon Shabuh being angry, ordered Isaac to be deposed from the pontifical chair; but shortly after Ardashir, son of the Persian monarch, reinstated him in the pontifical authority.

Armenia now being a little tranquillized under the wise government of Vramshabuh <sup>1</sup> the successor of king Chosroes, A. D. 395, St. Isaac commenced repairing the churches which had fallen into decay. He entirely rebuilt the church of St. Ripsima, which was destroyed by Shabuh; while prosecuting this work, he discovered the urn of the Saint sealed with the cross-engraven signet of St. Gregory. St. Isaac having affixed his own seal on the urn, near that of St. Gregory, carefully replaced it.

At this time St. Mesrob became famous for sanctity and wisdom. He was the son of a pious man named Vartan, of the vil-

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Armen., p. 139.

lage of Hatzeg in the province of Daron, and having become well versed in the sciences and Greek literature, had attached himself to St. Nierses the Great and become his secretary. After the death of St. Nierses, as he was perfectly acquainted with the Greek, Syrian and Persian languages, Aravan, an Armenian chief, solicited him to remain at the Court, where he became Chancellor. But seven years after, realizing the transient nature of the glory of this world, he retired into the province of Koghten where he entered a Convent. There he led a solitary and peaceful life of penitence and virtue, which so influenced several people that they became his attached disciples.

Now St. Mesrob, hearing of the fame of St. Isaac, and of all the deeds which he performed in behalf of the Armenians, was induced to leave his solitude and set out to visit him. He attached himself to the Pontiff, and being duly authorized, he taught and preached in all parts of the kingdom, instructing every body in the true faith. Having been informed of the existence of a heathen and diabolic sect in the province of Koghten, he besought the chief of that place to grant him his assistance in expelling the evil. The chief helping him willingly, he succeeded in his

purpose and entirely and for ever extirpated the sect. But although we are told in the Armenian history of the existence of this sect, we have no account of its nature.

FIFTH CENTURY.

I

Invention of the Armenian Alphabet. — Translation of the Bible. — Confusion in Armenia. — St. Isaac and Mesrob take refuge in the Greek division of Armenia.

The most important event that occurred in the beginning of this century, was the invention of the Armenian alphabet, the consequence of which was the translation of the Bible into Armenian. The Armenians until this period having no national characters for the purpose of writing, they used the Greek, Syriac, or Persian alphabet, all of them quite insufficient to give correctly the Armenian pronounciation. The Scriptures were, for the same reason, read in the Armenian churches in the Greek or Syriac languages, unintelligible to the majority of the people.

St. Mesrob, who had dedicated himself entirely to the good of his country, having met with no success in his applications for assistance to the learned, sought to gain his desire by prayer and by his

own efforts. It is related in his biography, written by one of his disciples, that during his prayer he received, in a vision, from the Almighty the object of his incessant supplications. He invented the Armenian characters in exquisite perfection, and forthwith began to translate the book of Proverbs and the New Testament from the Greek; in this labour he was assisted by two of his pupils, John of Egueghiatz, and Joseph of Baghin. This event occurred in the year of grace 406.

Through the influence of St. Mesrob many schools were opened, in which the Armenian characters were introduced.

St. Isaac then commenced translating the Old Testament from the Syriac, as the apostate Merujan having burned all the Greek manuscripts, he did not possess a good copy in that language.

Thus the light of divine science became diffused through the country, by means of the incessant labour of the Saints Isaac and Mesrob, whose names were immortalized in that age of learning, which was rightly styled *the Golden Age of Armenian Literature*. Several learned disciples were sent by the two Saints to Edessa and Constantinople, for the purpose of translating Greek books into Armenian. These individuals having found in the imperial libra-

ry an exact copy of the Old Testament, according to the Septuagint, and a correct one of the New Testament in the Greek language, brought them into Armenia, where St. Isaac, assisted by St. Mesrob, commenced translating them anew. And as some difficulties occurred, they sent their pupils to Alexandria and Athens to perfect themselves in the knowledge of Greek. After their return the translations were finished by the removal of those difficulties which had impeded the labours of their masters.

About the year 418, Hazguerd, king of Persia commenced a cruel persecution of the Christians and many were martyred by him. Of these martyrs several are yearly commemorated in the Armenian Church. St. Isaac being much esteemed by the Persian monarch, and seeing that the persecution became daily more violent, took a journey into Persia, and by mild language and good counsels, succeeded in softening the monarch's heart. The persecution ceased and the christians were left to enjoy a little peace.

During this period Armenia was in a state of great confusion. There was no reigning king, the Persians being unwilling to allow an Armenian on the throne, as they cherished a wish to alienate them

from the christian faith. The Armenian chiefs lived separately in their strongholds, and the Persian division in Armenia was in the greatest anarchy for a period of three years. The Persian king also, who had succeeded Hazguerd, being much incensed against the Armenians, cruelly harassed the inhabitants of the country.

St. Isaac observing these calamities, determined to leave that part of the country, and taking with him St. Mesrob and his three grandsons, Vartan, Hemayag and Hamazasbian, went to the Greek division of Armenia. But the chiefs here would not acknowledge him their Pontiff, being under the spiritual government of the bishop of Cesarea; neither would they allow St. Mesrob to instruct their children in the knowledge of the Armenian letters.

St. Isaac, offended at this, despatched letters to the Emperor Theodosius, and Atticus the Patriarch of Constantinople, as also to Anatolius, general of the Greeks in the East, praying to be permitted to exercise the authority of Pontiff in the division of Armenia under the government of the Emperor. He also begged for permission to institute schools for the instruction of youth in the Armenian language by means of the newly invented characters. These letters were entrusted to St. Mesrob who was ac-



accompanied by Vartan. The Emperor having perused the letters addressed to him, and being pleased with the elegant manners of St. Mesrob, granted St. Isaac's request and likewise appointed Vartan Generalissimo of the Armenian troops belonging to his division of the country. Atticus, also, the patriarch, as far as regarded his spiritual authority, had no objection to St. Isaac assuming the government of the Armenian church. He appointed St. Mesrob an hierarch, who proved himself vigilant and wise in the performance of his sacred function.

On the return of St. Mesrob the Armenians received St. Isaac as their spiritual guide, and also founded schools for the instruction of their youth in the knowledge of the newly invented Armenian letters. This occurred in the year 421.

## II

Return of St. Isaac to the Persian division of Armenia. —  
Regulation of the Church ceremonies and of the Ritual. —  
The Council of Vagharshabad and its canons.

Vram, king of Persia, having for three years cruelly harassed the inhabitants of his part of Armenia, in the year 422

found that it was almost depopulated; he therefore relaxed his severity and proposed terms of peace, promising at the same time to appoint king over Armenia the son of Vramshabuh the former monarch of the Armenians.

The Armenian chiefs accepting the terms, immediately wrote to St. Isaac and besought him earnestly to return. He thereupon leaving St. Mesrob in the Greek division of Armenia to superintend the Armenian church and the instruction of the people, repaired to the Persian division, where he was expected in the city of Vagharshabad. With Mesrob he left two grandsons, taking Vartan alone with him.

The chiefs of the Persian division of Armenia having been convened in a meeting at Vagharshabad, elected Sumpad the Pakradunian and Vartan the grandson of St. Isaac, and sent them to Vram the king of Persia, promising him allegiance. Thereupon Ardashes or Ardashir was appointed king of Armenia. For about six years the inhabitants of that country enjoyed a little peace, during which time, in the year 425, St. Mesrob also repaired to Vagharshabad to confer with St. Isaac. Having consulted each other on literary points, they decided to send some of their most talented pupils to Edessa for the purpose of transcribing in

armenian characters those books which they might find there written in the armenian language but with syriac characters. In the mean time they would also translate into Armenian the works of the Syrian Fathers.

This being decided upon some of their pupils were sent to Edessa, others to Constantinople. These were six in number, who working hard for about seven years, rendered signal service to their country and enriched their national church and literature with precious works.

While these were working in foreign countries, St. Isaac and St. Mesrob commenced regulating the church ceremonies. They compiled the Breviary, appointing the services, for the Dominical Feasts and those for the saints, for which object they consulted the ecclesiastical books of the Greek church. Thus these two Saints are reputed the first authors of the five ecclesiastical books of the Armenian Church; namely,

The *Breviary*, which was completed afterwards by their pupils Kewd and John Mantaguny.

The *Calendar*, which afterwards also received additions.

The *Liturgy*, which was enriched by John Mantaguny.

The *book of church hymns*, which was

afterwards augmented by Moses of Khoren and others.

The *Ritual* or book for the Administration of the Sacraments and other offices.

This last book was completed by St. Mesrob, who, through the assistance of his pupils, having collected many prayers of the old Fathers and lessons of the Scriptures, also added to them of his own, and thus, with the consent of St. Isaac, formed the Ritual of the Armenian church, which was named *Mashdotz* after the name of St. Mesrob.

Although all these ecclesiastical ceremonies had existed in Armenia since the time of St. Gregory, yet they were conducted according to Greek and Syriac custom. Isaac and Mesrob, however combined the two rites, or borrowing from both, and completing with original additions, thus formed the Armenian Rite which is one of the glories of the Armenian Church.

Then, St. Isaac, wishing to reform the discipline of the Church, convened an assembly of bishops in the city of Vagharshabad, in which many canons were proposed and accepted.

Some of these canons refer to suffragan bishops, as the following :

CANONS OF THE SYNOD OF VAGHARSHABAD.

1. *Men of virtue and discretion only shall be chosen for suffragans.*

2. *The suffragans ought to provide that the altar for the holy Sacrament be kept in order with its ornaments, and that the light of a lamp never fail before it.*

3. *The baptistery with its font shall be near the altar or in the sacristy.*

4. *The prescribed service shall be held in the church at the appointed time.*

5. *The suffragans should superintend the church ceremonies, and every year they must visit the diocese, to see how the service is performed in the churches, and to amend and redress where necessary.*

6. *Should they find any of the priests negligent in the service of the church, they shall punish him.*

7. *If they find among the clergy any intemperate, or licentious, or idle, they shall suspend him from the ministry.*

8. *They shall take care that no one born of unlawful marriage, or living with two wives, be admitted to orders.*

9. *They shall never dare to torment the people.*

10. *They shall behave themselves discreetly, shewing a good example to those entrusted to their spiritual care.*

Other canons regard the Priests, and are the following:

1. *The priests should not be ignorant or debauched persons.*

2. *They should see to the instruction of their own children.*

3. *The chief priest <sup>1</sup> shall remain always in the church, but the others shall be changed week by week.*

4. *When the priest baptizes, no woman shall assist.*

5. *When there is a priest present at the baptismal service, deacons are not to officiate.*

6. *The officiating priest shall remain in the church, or in the residence of the chief Priest.*

7. *Two thirds of the revenues of the church shall appertain to the chief priest.*

8. *Every year, after Easter, the priests shall receive the holy oil of the chrism from the High Pontiff or Catholicos.*

9. *The priests must never lend the curtain of the*

<sup>1</sup> Vartabied or Priest-doctor in theology; he is an unmarried priest to whose care the church is intrusted.

altar for the purpose of ornamenting the nuptial bed; nor use the chalice as a drinking pot; and he who is so irreverent as to do so shall be deprived of orders.

10. *Priests may not exercise the office of an agent in the house of a layman.*

11. *Priests shall be interred near the public cemetery, and not, for honour, in the church and before the altar.*

12. *Priests shall never take the holy Sacrament to the house of laymen, except in case of sickness.*

13. *They shall teach the people to abstain from evil, and to punish those who do not amend themselves.*

14. *They shall never permit marriages between children.*

15. *In the same way they shall never unite adults in matrimony, without their mutual consent.*

16. *They should carefully ascertain that no fraud be committed, nor any violence used by parents to effect marriages between their children.*

17. *They shall perform the service all together.*

18. *If they know that a communicant has already eaten at home and demands to partake of the Sacrament, they shall not permit him to do so.*

19. *Laymen may not divide among themselves offerings presented to priests in the church.*

20. *The funds, which according to ancient custom the priests derive from laymen, shall not be spent uselessly.*

21. *Priests shall never allow intemperate drinking, nor clamorous mournings and lamentations at the interment of the dead.*

22. *Priests shall never expell those of their people who have done any wrong without having first made due investigation ; likewise they shall not punish those who belong to another congregation.*

23. *Monks and conventuals shall never intermeddle with things belonging to laymen, but live a life of complete self-denial.*

### III

Deposition of St. Isaac from his authority. — Surmag, Purkishow, Shemuel. — The Council of Ephesus. — The letter of the Fathers of the Council. — The Syrian heretics. — The assembly of Ashilishad.

While in consequence of these opportune regulations the Armenian Church was in the enjoyment of a little peace, the discontent among the nobles which had already for some time existed against Ardashir on account of the vicious habits to which he abandoned himself, broke out in open hostil-



ity. Relinquishing all hopes of his reform, they besought St. Isaac to join them in soliciting from Vram the deposition of Ardashir, and the appointment of a Persian governor in his room.

St. Isaac rejected their proposal with indignation : « I cannot consent, said he, to betray the smaller criminal into the hands of the greater, or to exchange my infirm sheep for a healthy wolf. »

The chiefs then proceeded to Vram and complained both of Ardashir and St. Isaac. The Persian king immediately sent for the accused, saying to the complainants : « It is not customary with us to condemn the accused upon the bare assertion of the accusers. Let us hear their defence. »

Ardashir and St. Isaac having arrived in Persia were judged, and although they were found innocent, yet the Persian king desirous of possessing the whole of Armenia, deposed Ardashir and removed St. Isaac from the pontifical chair, confining him in prison and confiscating all his property. This event occurred in the year 428.

The Persian monarch then appointed one named Surmag to succeed St. Isaac in the government of the Armenian Church. He was a priest from the city of Ardzgué, in the province of Puznunities, who had joined the chiefs in the plot and had falsely

complained against St. Isaac, the chiefs having promised him on that condition the pontifical chair. His conduct, however, becoming insupportable in his new dignity, he was expelled by the chiefs from the government of the Armenian Church, after possessing it for the brief period of one year. On his expulsion he retired to his province, where he bitterly repented of the injury he had done St. Isaac.

Purkishow, an Assyrian, then became pontiff, in the year 42<sup>1</sup>, but proved worse than his predecessor, by forcibly extorting the private property of the bishops. The chiefs soon became disgusted with him, and wished for his removal. Some were desirous of reappointing St. Isaac, others of seeing another in the pontifical dignity. Both parties signified their wishes to Vram, who seeking to please all, restored St. Isaac to his dignity, but permitted him to act only in a strictly spiritual capacity, nominating another, named Shemuel, a Syrian, as his colleague, whose office was to supervise the temporal matters of the Armenian clergy.

Shemuel, the Syrian, was a disgrace to the pontificate. He was more intolerable, and of a more avaricious nature than Purkishow; for the latter used to confiscate the property of the bishops after their death,

but Shemuel that of those who were still alive. If any bishop happened to die, he would not allow St. Isaac to consecrate another in his stead; in order that he might be free to dispose of the property and the revenues of his diocese.

About this period, A. D. 431, the great Council of Ephesus, in which Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople, was anathematized and deposed from his dignity, took place. St. Isaac was invited to the Council by the Emperor, but he being still in Persia, had not the opportunity of being present. On the conclusion of the Council, however, several of the principal bishops, among whom Cyril of Alexandria, wrote a letter to the Armenians, notifying what the Council had deliberated, and how Nestorius and his doctrines were condemned. This letter was trusted to those pupils of St. Mesrob, who were still in Constantinople, occupied in the translation of Greek works.

These translators hastened back to Armenia and meeting St. Isaac and St. Mesrob in the city of Ashdishad, in the province of Daron, delivered the letter of the Fathers of the Council. Thereupon an assembly was held of Armenian bishops, priests and abbots, in which the letter of the Acts of the Ephesian Council being

read, the doctrine of the Fathers was accepted by them, and Nestorius and his followers were anathematized.

The doctrines of Nestorius, however, were introduced into Syria by his followers, where the books of Theodore of Mopsueste, his master, were also translated into Armenian, with the intention of spreading false doctrines in Armenia. This being brought to the knowledge of St. Isaac and St. Mesrob, they watched carefully over the Armenian church; and so much the more, because Shemuel, occupying the pontifical chair and being a wicked man and a Syrian, favoured the introduction of the Nestorian heretics, his countrymen, into Armenia, where they endeavoured to spread their heresy. A national assembly was held again in the city of Ashdishad, where the books of Theodore of Mopsueste being examined, were condemned by all the Armenian clergy. The Acts of this assembly were notified by St. Isaac to Proclus, patriarch of Constantinople, who overjoyed at the news, wrote a most congratulatory reply.

#### IV

Death of Shemuel, of St. Isaac and St. Mesrob. — Joseph of Hoghotzim. — The assembly of Shahabivan. — Consequence of the Vartanian religious war. — Melidé is elected Pontiff. — Martyrdom of the St. Levontians. — Sufferings of the chiefs and their return to Armenia.

Shemuel the Syrian after holding the pontifical dignity seven years died, A. D. 439, to the great relief of the Armenians.

On this event the chiefs came to St. Isaac, and soliciting his forgiveness for the injuries they had done him, besought him to be their sole Pontiff. He refused to comply informing them that he had had a vision, wherein he was forewarned of the removal of the pontificate from the house of St. Gregory the Illuminator, and of the kingdom from the race of the Arshagunies.

He then retired to a village called Plur, in the province of Pakrevant, and there died on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 439, the anniversary of his birth. His body was buried in the village of Ashdishad. A magnificent church was erected over his remains, and an annual commemoration held, on each

return of which, we are told, many miracles were wrought.

Mesrob or Mashdotz, surnamed the Blessed, succeeded St. Isaac, and died after a short pontificate of six months. This event took place in the city of Vagharshabad; his remains were interred in the village of Oshagan. An annual feast was also instituted in remembrance of him.

Joseph, from the village of Hoghotzim, in the Valley of Vayotz, a disciple of St. Isaac and St. Mesrob, by the direction of the latter just before his death, took possession of the pontifical chair. Not being a bishop, he was not qualified to confer ordination, this office being performed by Surmag, the expelled pontiff, of whom we made some mention before. Shortly after he held an assembly in Shahabivan, A. D. 447, when he established twenty canons, with suitable penalties attached to the breach of them, for the better administration of the spiritual affairs of the people.

During this period Armenia was in a dreadful state in consequence of the persecution of the Armenians, Georgians and Aghuans, by the Persian monarch Hazguerd, who would pervert those nations to idolatry.

Armenia could scarcely resist, being quite demoralized by the dethronement of

Ardashir her last king and by the overwhelming preponderance of the Persian power; nevertheless Vartan the Grandson of St. Isaac, took the supreme command of the national forces, and supported by several of the chiefs, fought against the invaders, with what result we have already related in the History of Armenia <sup>1</sup>.

At the death of Vartan the general, Adrormizd the Prefect, bound in fetters and sent the following individuals to Persia; viz. St. Joseph the Pontiff, Isaac, bishop of the Reshdunians, the priests Mushé, Samuel, Abraham, Levond and Arshen; some of their scholars, among whom was Khoren and Abraham, with the deacon Cadjadj. On the arrival of these victims in Persia, they were tortured on the rack by order of Mihernerseh, and confined in the common gaol.

After this the Prefect wrote to the bishops and chiefs throughout Armenia, inviting them to an open profession of their religion, in compliance with the will of Hazguerd. He then urged the more distinguished chiefs to renounce all fear and to visit the king. They consented to the Prefect's proposal on receiving Hazguerd's oath, guaranteeing their safety. Previous to

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Arm., p. 148.

their setting out in their journey, having no hopes of the return of St. Joseph, they directed an assembly of bishops to be held in the city of Duin, for the election of a Pontiff. The assembly taking place, the choice of the clergy fell upon Melidé, bishop of Manazguerd, who forthwith assumed the pontifical dignity in the year 452, and established his chair in Duin.

The chiefs then set out for the Court of Persia, where on their arrival they were arrested and thrown into gaol with the priests. Here they were tormented in various ways, to force them to embrace the Persian religion.

Some time after, Hazguerd engaged in a war with the Huns; on his setting out with his army against that people, he directed the imprisoned Armenian chiefs and priests to be conveyed in irons to the castle of the city of Newshabuh, and there made over to the charge of the chief of the Magi, in order that they might be allowed no repose. The chief Magus while using every torture in order to force them to abandon their faith, became convinced that the hand of the Almighty was stretched forth for their protection, and became a proselyte to christianity. It is related that he beheld in a vision the blessed saints, the Vartanians, surrounded by the



glory of God, and rejoicing at his conversion.

Hazguerd was unsuccessful in his expedition against the Huns, and enraged at his disgrace, he consulted his Magi who assured him that his defeat was owing to his not having exterminated the imprisoned priests, who had overturned the altars of the Persian Gods. Hazguerd on hearing this, immediately caused the priests Samuel and Abraham, whom he had taken with him on his expedition, to be brought out and tortured to death. He then sent Tenshabuh to the Castle of Newshabuh, to despatch those confined there. On his arrival he took the captives, to a distant place, and there martyred them on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July, 454.

An individual, a native of Chusistan, who was secretly a christian, buried their bodies. Levont the priest being the most distinguished among these martyrs, they were henceforward called Levontians. Tenshabuh also tortured two of their pupils, Khoren and Abraham, and caused them to be driven into Syria.

These glorious martyrs, i. e. the Vartanians and the Levontians, who gave their life in defence of the faith, are counted among the most illustrious martyrs of the Armenian Church. Their commemoration

takes place in the last week of the carnival, and there is no Armenian whose heart does not beat with a sentiment of national glory at the remembrance of their generous conduct.

After the death of the Levontians, the Armenian chiefs remained in fetters and in prison exposed to all the vicissitudes of heat and cold, without bedding of any description, scantily fed, and at times enduring the extremes of hunger and thirst. They bore all without murmuring; and though Hazguerd still added to their miseries, by torturing them on account of their religion, offering to restore them to their country and families, with power and honour, if they would deny their faith, all was ineffectual; they remained steadfast in their attachment to those doctrines in defence of which their ancestors had been martyred.

After a confinement of four years, they were released, A. D. 456, but were not permitted to leave the capital. On the year after their release, A. D. 457, Melidé the Pontiff, who had succeeded St. Joseph when he was taken into Persia, died after governing the Church of Armenia for five years. Seven years after his death and during the reign of king Phiroz, the successor of Hazguerd, the Armenian chiefs were

permitted to return to Armenia, to the great joy of their families as well as of all the Armenians. On their return home they united in the practice of every christian virtue, and became eminent for the piety their conduct evinced.

## V

Moses the First. — Kewd. — Christopher the Ardzerunian. — John the Mantagunian. — Pappuen of Othmus. — The relics of St. Gregoris and St. Elishé.

At the death of Melidé Moses the First succeeded to the pontifical chair, A. D. 457. He enjoyed the dignity eight years, and then dying, was succeeded by a disciple of St. Isaac and St. Mesrob, Kewd, from the village of Arahetz, in the province of the Daik. He was a pious man and eminent for wisdom and science. He was a great proficient in Greek literature, and upon the whole, a great ornament to the pontificate. Although at his election he was nearly seventy years old, he set about correcting the disorders which had crept among his people, with admirable zeal and ardour. He was also not sparing of admonition and reproof to the profligate, where

he had an opportunity of noting their vices. This created him enemies and one of them, Katishó the Khorkhorunian, complained against him to the king of Persia. Phiroz hereupon sent for Kewd, and having examined the deeds which had distinguished his pontificate, found nothing worthy of reprehension. He, however, tempted the Pontiff to embrace the Persian religion, who expressing indignation at the proposal, was by the king's orders, removed from the pontificate, A. D. 474, and one named Christopher was to be elected in his stead. Kewd afterwards returned to Armenia where he died, after living in retirement two years. He was buried in the village of Othmus after he had governed the Armenian Church ten years, during which time he had regulated the ceremonies anew and made many improvements.

Christopher the Ardzerunian was appointed Pontiff by Phiroz the king of Persia, in the room of Kewd, and died five years after. During his pontificate Bardzuma, A. D. 480, bishop of Nisibis, who had associated himself with the Nestorian heretics, began to spread abroad in Persia the Nestorian heresy. Christopher, on coming to the knowledge of this evil, wrote to all the provinces to beware of admitting it. Bardzuma attempting to dissemi-

nate these doctrines in Armenia, was expelled from the country by the chief Nershabuh the Ardzerunian.

John the Mantagunian from the village of Zakhnod in the province of the Arsharunians, a fellow disciple with Kewd, was appointed to succeed Christopher at the age of seventy five. He was an estimable character, and materially improved some of the church ordinances, particularly those respecting ordination. He also modified the book of instructions for the celebration of the Eucharist. He also composed many sermons and collects, and his prayers are the most excellent in use among the Armenians.

During the sway of these pontiffs several of their fellow disciples, among whom were Eghishé and Moses of Khoren, seeing the dreadful disorders that pervaded the country, retired to convents and deserts, where they employed themselves in religious studies.

During the pontificate of John Mantaguni, Armenia was again engaged in a religious war against the Persians. Vahan the Mamigonian was then the champion and the protector of the Christian faith<sup>1</sup>. After several years of contest with the Per-

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Armen., p. 159.

sians, peace was made and Vahan appointed Prefect of the Armenians. John the Mantagunian after witnessing the peaceful state of Armenia, died A. D. 187, after a pontificate of six years and a half.

Papguen, from the village of Othmus in the province of Vanant, a disciple of John Mantaguni, succeeded to the pontifical chair. Two years after, the relics of St. Gregoris, the pontiff of the Aghuans, were discovered by Vatchagan, king of that people, and the relics of St. Elishé, a disciple of St. Thaddeus the Apostle, were also found among the Aghuans.

## VI

**The Council of Chalcedonia. — Zeno's letter. — The synod of Vagharshabad where the Council of Chalcedon is rejected. — The doctrine of the Armenian Church on this point.**

We have now reached the year of Grace 491. This was a memorable, though doleful year in the history of the Armenian Church. A complete acquaintance with the facts that then occurred being necessary, we will devote a few pages to their narration.

While Armenia was the victim of that

religious persecution, raised against her by Hazguerd, the Persian king, A. D. 450<sup>1</sup>, Constantinople was also the theatre of dreadful religious disorder. Eutyches, the Abbot of a renowned convent in the imperial city, while combatting the heretical doctrines of Nestorius, fell into another heresy and denied the doctrine of the *Two Natures* in Christ. This caused almost a revolution in the capital of Greece, and Flavianus, the Greek Patriarch, in endeavouring to oppose Eutyches and his followers, was cruelly scourged by them and died in consequence three days after.

The confusion, occasioned by Eutyches' heresy, continuing to increase, two years after the death of Flavianus, A. D. 451, the Emperor Marcianus ordered a Council to be held in Chalcedonia, near Constantinople, in which Eutyches and all his followers were anathematized by the six hundred and thirty bishops who were present in the Council. The doctrine of the Two Natures in Christ was firmly established, the adversaries were exiled and the Emperor imagined he had thus procured repose. All efforts were, however, vain, for the fanatic followers of the heresy spread themselves all over Asia, and by speech

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Arm., p. 148.

and pen endeavoured to prove that the Chalcedonian Council had accepted the heresy of Nestorius.

It was in the same year of the Council that the Armenians were most seriously engaged in their strife with the Persians. It was therefore impossible to send deputies to the Council, of whose decisions they had been left in ignorance. And now that under the civil government of Vahan the Prefect <sup>1</sup>, and the pontificate of Papguen, they began to enjoy a little peace, the followers of Eutyches endeavoured to introduce themselves into Armenia, sustaining the doctrines of their teacher and condemning those of the Oecumenical Council. On the other side the Nestorians also finding their opportunity, endeavoured to render Nestorius orthodox by declaring that the Chalcedonian Council had positively admitted his opinions, and that therefore it was unjust to condemn him.

While the Armenians were perplexed how to decide with regard to these new doctrines, a copy of a letter written by the Emperor Zeno, for the purpose of allaying the religious troubles excited by the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches, was introduced in the country. In that letter Zeno

<sup>1</sup> See hist. of Arm., p. 159.



mentioned only the three former Councils, viz. those of Nice, Constantinople and Ephesus; that of Chalcedon he did not mention, or rather, under a certain condition he had condemned it. Zeno's intention, however, was not to condemn the Council of Chalcedon; nevertheless he, through the equivocal style of his letter was the cause of many doubts as to the soundness of this last Council. And so much the more as the same letter bore the signatures of many bishops.

Papguen, the Armenian Pontiff, having read this letter and seen the signatures of the bishops, adopted its contents as sound doctrine. And indeed it was perfectly orthodox, as it agreed with the creed of the three holy Councils, and in some measure with that of Chalcedon. Different opinions, however, arising, Papguen, A. D. 491, convened a large assembly of bishops in the Armenian cathedral in the city of Vagharshabad, which was also attended by the Pontiffs of the Aghuans and the Georgians, with their bishops. Here, after anathematizing Nestorius and Eutyches, and their followers, they read Zeno's letter; and assenting to all it contained, they rejected the Council of Chalcedon; it appearing to them that the Greeks did not acknowledge it.

In the same year in which the assembly

of Vagharshabad was held, Anastasius succeeded to the imperial throne, and perceiving that much confusion prevailed in the East about the Council of Chalcedon, issued a decree prohibiting all from speaking any more concerning it, either good or bad. The Armenians coming to the knowledge of this, said to each other: « If the Greeks do not acknowledge the Council holden by themselves, what occasion have we to concern ourselves about it? »

Thus the Armenians being deprived of true information about the holy Council of Chalcedon, and supposing that its decisions were not all to be relied on, rejected it, though they admitted and always gave proof of belief in the doctrine it had established. The cause of this deplorable event which has since then been continually the source of accusations against the Armenian Church, was, as above stated, lack of information, and there can be no doubt that the Syrian dissidents and the enemies of the Council generally availed themselves of this circumstance, created by the desolating and all absorbing warfare with the Persians, to influence the Armenians; otherwise they would never have rejected it, as Mekhithar, a pontiff of the Armenians in the fourteenth century said: « The Council of Chalcedon was rejected by the

Armenians, in consequence of that wicked and lying people (the Syrians), from whom the Holy Ghost is far off, and who wishing to sow discord in the Church, basely propagated in Armenia that the Council had accepted the heresy of Nestorius. Some of the Armenians being deceived, gave credence to this imposture, and rejected the holy Council, believing it to have fallen into error. »

Having once rejected the Council of Chalcedon, the Armenians, in the succeeding years, took no care to make investigations about the true meaning of its definitions. They without doubt believed that their ancestors, during the time of the pontiff Papguen, in rejecting the Council had made the necessary inquiries on the subject. The enmity also that broke out between them and the Greeks, and the many calumnies they endured from the latter, were sufficient cause to embitter their minds and to render the Armenians obstinate in their prejudices against the Council of Chalcedon.

The expression it had used, the *Two Natures* in Christ, also puzzled their minds. The Syrian heretics, who were the most inveterate enemies of the Council, and on whom, in their isolation, the Armenians had depended for intelligence from Greece,

had wilfully deceived them stating that it had adopted the error of Nestorius, and by the expression of the *Two Natures* it intended a division or two different persons in one Christ. They therefore, in order to avoid falling into the same error, adopted the expression of St. Cyril of Alexandria against Nestorius: « One Nature of the Word made flesh, » and continued to hold: « One nature in Christ; » meaning by this expression *One personality*, by reason of the indivisible union of the two natures.

This expression, however, in later times was the cause of many contests between the Armenians and the Greeks, and the former were obliged to write many articles in defence of its right interpretation. In these they clearly stated that the formula, « *Two Natures in Christ*, » declared and signified naught but that, « *Christ is One, true God and true m:n, possessing perfectly the divine as well as the human nature, united in Him without confusion and without division; having suffered passion and death in his humanity, but immortal and not liable to suffering in his divinity.* »

In concluding this chapter we cannot refrain from quoting the words of St. Nerses Shnorhaly, one of the most renowned patriarchs of Armenia. He governed the Armenian Church in the XII<sup>th</sup> century, and

having received a letter from the Greek Emperor Manuel on this subject, he wrote to him in reply and explained the orthodox meaning of the Armenian expression. He says in this letter : « As for our saying *One nature*, let nobody understand it otherwise than as referring to the indivisible union of the two natures, as taught by the orthodox fathers of the Church, and principally by St. Cyril of Alexandria against Nestorius.... Therefore taking these for our guides in the way of truth which leads to God, we are naturally and freely induced to a two-fold consideration of these words ; *One* the Nature of the Word made flesh, according to St. Cyril, by reason of the ineffable union ; and *Two-fold*, according to St. Gregory the Theologian, inasmuch as the two natures, Divine and Human, remain unfounded and unchanged. »

## VII

Samuel of Ardzgué. — Religious persecution.

The year following the assembly of Vagharshabad, Papguen died, having enjoyed the pontificate five years. He was succeeded by Samuel, from the village of Ardzgué, in

the province of the Peznunies. Some time after, when the disputes that had arisen about the Council of Chalcedon had a little subsided, the fire of religious persecution was again kindled by the Persians in Armenia. Cavad, the successor of Vagharsh on the throne of Persia, instigated by the Magi, sent a Persian governor to Armenia, accompanied by a large force and a number of priests, for the purpose of perverting the Armenians to creed of Zoroaster. These began to erect and dedicate temples to fire-worship, and were assisted by many of their countrymen resident in Armenia. The more timid of the inhabitants were also allured to embrace fire-worship. In most parts, however, the greatest disgust was exhibited and many publicly resisted their proceedings. Tumult and uneasiness pervaded the whole nation. Vahan the mamigonian afflicted at the renewal of those persecutions, being joined by other chiefs, collected a force, attacked the persian governor and his army and put them all to the sword; thus once more saving his country from the horrors of idolatry.

SIXTH CENTURY.

I

The Synod of Duin. — Succession of the Pontiffs. — The sacred Likeness of our Lord. — Persecution against the Christians. — Moses the Second and the reform of the Armenian Calendar. — Heresies of Julian of Halicarnassus. — Hizdipuzd. — The Georgian pontiff and the Council of Chalcedon.

In the second year of the sixth century, Samuel the Pontiff died after a pontificate of ten years. His successor was Mushé, from the village of Aghperitz or Aylaperitz, who died eight years after. Isaac the Second, from the village of Ughg, in the province of Hark, next became pontiff, A. D. 510; he died five years after. Christopher the Second, from the village of Diraridj, in the province of Pakrevant, succeeded him and enjoyed the dignity for six years; he died, A. D. 521, and was succeeded by Levont, from the village of Little Erasd, in the province of Arperany. He died three years after, and Nierses the Second, from the village of Ashdarag, in

the province of Pakrevant, was next elected, A. D. 524. Shortly after his induction Nierses having observed certain irregularities in the conduct of some of the priests, particularly of those who resided in rural districts, convened a synod of bishops in the city of Duin, and with their assistance drew up and promulgated a code of thirty eight articles to be observed by the Armenian ecclesiastics. He continued in the pontificate nine years, when dying he was succeeded by John the Second, A. D. 533, from the village of Suntzeghin, in the province of the Kapeghenies. During his pontificate and in the year 539, Chosroes king of Persia being at war with the Greeks, besieged the city of Edessa. The citizens, perplexed at their danger, offered up prayers to God for their safety. Then, as is recorded, Eulalius, the bishop, had a divine vision, in which he was ordered to go to the chief gate of the city and take out from the niche, which had been walled up by bishop Addé, the Sacred Effigies granted to Abgar by our Lord. The bishop, accordingly, went to the spot and found the sacred image, forgotten there since the time of Addé the first bishop of Edessa. Through this sacred relic Eulalius, it is said, wrought many miracles and infused courage among the inhabitants. All the ef-



forts of the Persians to take the city were vain, and finally they were obliged to raise the siege. Thus was the city of Edessa saved.

After this event Chosroes sent one Tenshabuh, a Persian, as Prefect to Armenia. This individual renewed the old persecution, compelling the people to adopt the religion of the Magi and harassing them mercilessly on finding they resisted his wishes; so that many were martyred on account of their adherence to their religion. While these vexations troubled the nation, John the pontiff died, having governed the Church with credit and advantage seventeen years. He was succeeded, A. D. 551, by Moses the Second, a man of profound knowledge, from the village of Eghivart, in the province of Arakadzoden. The chief event during this pontificate was the reform of the Armenian Calendar. For, the year 552, completing the paschal period or cycle of 200 years, there ensued a dislocation in the Calendar of the day of the Easter feast, as well as of all the festival days depending upon it. Moses, in order to rectify this deviation, immediately after his elevation to the pontificate, assembled an assembly of bishops and laymen in the city of Duin, in which after much discussion, the Calendar was remodelled and corrected. The

Armenians afterwards counted the years from this period; so that the date of the Era of the new Calendar is reckoned from the 352<sup>nd</sup> year of our Lord, the first of the Armenian Calendar.

Some individuals endeavoured to disseminate in Armenia the heresies of Julian of Halicarnassus, who said that our Lord was not liable to bodily suffering, and that in Him all human passion and torments were apparent, not real. Moses the Pontiff thereupon caused them to be immediately banished from the country. A number of Magi having come with Tenshabuh the Prefect into Armenia, and having aided him in persecuting the Armenians in his attempt to pervert them to fire-worship, the pontiff applied to the Persian king for redress, imploring him to give his countrymen a little rest, and calling to his recollection the guarantee of no future molestation, which one of his predecessors, Vagharsh, had given the Armenians in the time of Vahan the Mamigonian; forbidding, at the same time, the revocation of that act by any of his successors on the throne of Persia. Chosroes, acknowledging the justice of the pontiff's remonstrance, recalled Tenshabuh the Prefect and replaced him by one who immediately prohibited the Magi from further molesting the people. A son of the

chief Magi, however, named Makhoj, having become a convert to christianity, taking the name of Hizdipuzd, speedily suffered martyrdom. This was the only act of severity in religious matters ordered by the new Prefect, and Armenia enjoyed several years of repose. Nevertheless when Suren Jiber Veshnasbuhen, a relation of Chosroes, was appointed Prefect, the old persecution was revived, and the nation was again plunged in mourning and desolation.

In the year 580, on the death of the pontiff of the Georgians, a dispute arose among that people respecting a successor. Not being able to come to an agreement, they wrote to Moses the Armenian pontiff, authorizing him to select and consecrate a fitting person, head of their church. Moses thereupon appointed Gurion a most learned and pious man, who though a Georgian by origin, had been appointed some time before, bishop in Armenia. Immediately after his elevation he proceeded to Georgia, and caused a correct account of the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedon, with its canons, to be brought from Constantinople and a precise translation of the code of St. Leo to be made. These being all examined, the Georgians, the Egerians, and some adjacent nations consented to acknowledge and abide by the Council and its decisions

The year after this event, A. D. 581, Moses the Pontiff, after governing the Armenian Church thirty years, became so old and feeble that he was unequal to the duties of his office, and was obliged to appoint a vicar, in the person of a Vartabed named Vertanes. This arrangement lasted for thirteen years when Moses died.

## II

The pontiff Abraham and Gurion.

The successor to Moses was Abraham, bishop of the Reshdunians, from the village of Aghpathans, A. D. 594. This pontiff became extremely dissatisfied with Gurion, the Pontiff of the Georgians, for accepting the Council of Chalcedon. He had previously written thrice to him to avoid receiving it. Gurion replied : « I am astonished that you are at variance with all other churches of Christ, which declare that the creed of the Council of Chalcedon is precisely the same with that of the three other councils. » Abraham not believing the council in question to be orthodox, and being unable to persuade Gurion against it, convoked a synod of bishops in Duin, where they ana-

thematized him and all those who accepted it. Thus he isolated the Armenians from all those who approved of the Council in question.

Gurion on being informed of this action of the Armenian Pontiff, was much grieved and complained to the Emperor Maurice who immediately ordered an assembly to be held at Constantinople, to which he invited both Greek and Armenian bishops. Abraham sent the Vartabieds Vertanes and Gregory as his proxies, with nineteen Armenian bishops, all from the division of the Greeks.

After a careful investigation and much deliberation, the Council of Chalcedon was declared orthodox, and the before mentioned bishops accepted it. But Vertanes and Gregory refused to recognise this decision and returned to Armenia.

SEVENTH CENTURY.

I

Division of the pontifical jurisdiction. — The Pontiff Gomidas and Ripsima's relics. — Christopher the Third. — Yezer. — The Council of Chalcedon is accepted by the Armenians. — John Mayrakometzi. — The Armenians of the Greek division introduce changes in their ecclesiastical ceremonies.

Unfortunately the want of unanimity among the members of the last council, and the resolute opposition of Abraham's two deputies to its decision, created great discord among the Armenians of the Persian and Greek divisions of the nation. The Emperor Maurice, desiring to set at rest all contention, relieved the Armenians subject to him from all obedience to Abraham, and appointed another pontiff in the person of John, an excellent and virtuous man from the village of Pakaran, in the province of Gok. He was directed to fix the seat of his spiritual jurisdiction, in the province of the Godays, in the town called Avan. This separation of the two divisions lasted sixteen

years, when John died, A. D. 616, and all separation between the spiritual government of the two divisions ceased. In the same year also Abraham, Pontiff of the Persian division of Armenia died and was succeeded by Gomidas, bishop of Daron and Abbot of the convent of Clag, a native of the village of Aghtz, in the province of Arakadzoden, and a prudent and pious character. This pontiff having undertaken to rebuilt the chapel of St. Ripsima, discovered her Urn, which, as we have before remarked, had the seals of St. Gregory and St. Isaac upon it. Gomidas, without opening the Urn placed his own seal in addition thereupon, and built on the site a splendid church in which he deposited the Urn. It was on this occasion that he wrote also the hymn, beginning : « *The souls devoted to the love of Christ,* » and caused it to be chanted during the ceremony. He also rebuilt the cupola of the cathedral of Etchmiadzin, constructing it with hewn stones, and adding many improvements to the church.

Gomidas the pontiff died A. D. 625, after holding that office eight years. His successor was Christopher the third, of a noble family, from the province of the Abahunians. He was a man of the most stern and unbending morality, equally impartial in his admonitions to poor and rich. Having

remarked with severity on some irregularities in the conduct of Varazdirotz the Prefect, and of other nobles, he became an object of dislike to them, and they sought to depose him from the pontificate. Christopher having observed this, resigned his office, after exercising it only for three years. He then retired to the vicinity of the village of Ughis, and built a large convent at the foot of Mount Massis (Ararat), where, having collected a number of monks, he lived in the practice of the most severe monastic discipline till the end of his life.

His successor in the pontificate was Yezer, from the village of Parajnaguerd, in the province of Nig. In the first year of his pontificate, the Emperor Heraclius, on his return from the Persian war visited the city of Garin. Many of the Armenians in the Greek dominion in Armenia had acknowledged the Council of Chalcedon, which not being generally approved of, was a cause of much dissension; the Emperor therefore during his stay at Garin directed an assembly of bishops, Greek as well as Armenian, to be held in that city, for the purpose of restoring unanimity amongst the followers of the Gospel. He also invited Yezer to be present at it, who having accepted the invitation, repaired to Garin, with the most distinguished bishops under his jurisdiction.



After much debate and the most minute investigation, the Armenians accepted the holy council of Chalcedon and its creed. This occurred A. D. 629.

Yezer then returned to Duin, where he was met by a procession of all the clergy, by whom he was conducted to the principal church. Here he made them acquainted with the proceedings of the council at Garin, with which all appeared to be content, except a Vartabied, named John, who, venturing resistance, was deprived of his clerical habit and driven from the city. He then retired to the convent of Mayr in the province of Nig, where, having made proselytes to his opinions, he caused much disturbance in the nation. Yezer thereupon ordered him to be banished from that convent, which, on his account was thenceforward designated Mayrakom, while he himself was called Mayrakometzi. This Vartabied then took refuge in the country of the Aghuans, in the most remote part of the province of Kartman accompanied by one disciple named Sarkis. These two having embraced the heresy of Julian of Halicarnassus, published a number of heretical propositions, which were answered and refuted at first by a Vartabied named Gregoradur. a man of profound knowledge, and afterwards by Theodore Kurthenavor and John the Philosopher.

Yezer, after his return from Garin, splendidly rebuilt with hewn stones the tomb of St. Kayané, and surrounded it by dwelling-houses for the officiating priests.

It is worthy of remark, that after the conclusion of the Council of Garin, many of the Armenians of the Greek dominion who had hitherto conformed to the religious observance of their own people, suddenly introduced changes in their ecclesiastical ceremonies, particularly in three instances: First they leavened the bread used at the sacred offerings, and mixed water with the wine. Secondly, they celebrated the feast of our Saviour's birth on the 25<sup>th</sup> December. Thirdly, in singing the anthem *Holy God, Holy and powerful, Holy and immortal, (who wert crucified)*, they omitted the last words. These innovations they wished to introduce into the Persian part of Armenia, which created considerable disturbance, and finally caused the Armenians to separate again from the Greeks, and renounce the Council of Chalcedon.

## II

Nierses the Builder and the relics of St. Gregory. — The Synod of Duin. — Disputes between the Greeks and the Armenians. — John Digorensis. — The Cross of Varak.

About the year 636 the Saracens invaded Armenia carrying away the inhabitants and desolating the country. Yezer the Pontiff was so much affected by these calamities, that he died of grief, after ruling the Church ten years and eight months.

He was succeeded by Nierses the Third, bishop of the Daik, surnamed the Builder, as he erected many churches and chapels of martyrs. He built the large church of St. Gregory in Vagharshabad, and placed the relics of the Saint under the four pillars, persuaded that in so doing he would for ever secure it from the devastations of conquerors. The head of St. Gregory was, however, put in a rich urn, and deposited near the altar, for comfort to the devout and cure of the diseased. It was afterwards removed by certain nuns to Naples, where it is still preserved, in the church of St. Gregory or S. Ligorio Armeno.

About the year 645, several heretical

books having found their way into Armenia, the pontiff held a Synod at Duin, where all heretical and schismatical books were anathematized; and presuming that the council of Chalcedon had accepted the heresies of Theodore of Mopsuesta, he rejected it. He then instituted twelve canons for the better regulation of the Church, and having observed that the hymns they used in the service of the church had become exceedingly numerous, directed the vartabied Parsegh or Basil, surnamed John, to make a selection which was afterwards known by the title of *Johnendir*, or John's selection of Hymns.

During this Pontiff's sway, Greek animosity rose to such a point that Constantine the Emperor assembled a numerous army and set out with a determination to coerce the Armenians by the sword. Nierses the Pontiff, accompanied by a number of bishops, priests and laymen, went to meet the Emperor and after much entreaty succeeded in calming his anger. Then at Duin, and in the presence of the Emperor, the minutes of the council of Chalcedon were read before all present, and the Armenians again consented to accept its decisions; thus a reconciliation was again effected between the Armenians and the Greeks. The Emperor then quitted Armenia leaving

there a quantity of troops with Greek generals and priests and returned to Constantinople. After his departure, the Greeks differing from the Armenians with regard to fasts and other religious observances, endeavoured to make them conform to their customs. Some of the Armenians complied and were much honoured on account of it by the Greeks, but most of the people looked upon these latter with contempt, and would not allow them to partake of the Communion in their churches. The Greeks hereupon complained to the Emperor, who wrote a threatening letter to the Armenians, directing them immediately to refrain from the odious distinction they made between the Christians of the two churches. Thereupon the Armenians held an assembly in the city of Duin and wrote a reply to the Emperor, entreating him to allow them to continue in the doctrines which they had received from St. Gregory and not compel them to adopt others. The Emperor willingly complied with their moderate desire; still the Greeks whom he had left in Armenia, being less tolerant, continued to harass them, and the Greek priests principally were incessant in endeavouring to force them to accept the Council of Chalcedon. During these disagreements Nierses the Pontiff seemed

to incline towards the Council in question, and administered the communion indiscriminately to Armenians and to Greeks. This being remarked, some persons stirred up against him the anger of Theodore the Reshdunian, General of the Armenians, which terrified the Pontiff so much, that he hastily took refuge in his native province of the Daik, where he remained six years.

On his flight Theodore appointed, A. D. 649, one John Digorensis, otherwise called Manazguerdensis, a disciple of Gregoradur of Antzakhatzor; who being a bitter enemy of the Chalcedonians, immediately took with him a few vartabieds and repaired to Manazguerd, where he held a meeting and rejected the Council of Chalcedon. Then, as we have before mentioned, several Armenians having begun to practise the Greek rite, John enacted five canons against them. First, he commanded that no water should be mixed with the wine used in the Eucharist. Secondly, that no leaven should be put in the bread designed for sacred offerings. Thirdly, that the birth of Christ should not be celebrated separately. Fourthly, that in the fasts, neither fish, oil, wine, eggs, nor butter was to be made use of, except on the Saturdays and Sundays of Lent.

Fifthly, that the Lord's supper was never to be partaken of on Maundy Thursday. This deed of the officiating Pontiff gained him such renown, that many of the people began to look upon him as a great man. After a lapse of time the proceedings of this council were published and erroneously imputed to John, the Philosopher.

After the death of Theodore the Reshdunian, which happened A. D. 653, Nierses the Builder returned to Duin and resumed his pontificate. Shortly after the Cross of Varak was discovered, and an annual feast appointed for the same. This Cross, according to the tradition, was brought to Armenia by St. Ripsima, and was hidden, until it was miraculously discovered, through the devotion of a holy hermit of the name of Thotig.

### III

Succession of the Pontiffs. — The Saracens in Duin. —  
David Duinensis.

Nierses the Pontiff surnamed the Builder died in the year 661, having enjoyed his dignity twenty years and nine months.

He was succeeded by Anastas from the village of Argury, which lay at the foot of Mount Ararat. He built a convent and church in his native place, and near it erected several inns and hospitals for the benefit of the poor. His pontificate lasted six years when he died and was succeeded by Israel from the village of Othmus, in the province of Vanant. He died ten years after, when in the year 677 Isaac the Third, bishop of Rodagk, from the village of Arkunashen in the province of Zorapor, became his successor. He was eminently distinguished in the sciences and in all human knowledge, and was brought up in the strictest observance of the duties of morality and piety, by the celebrated and learned Theodore. He governed the Armenian Church for twenty six years.

During his pontificate, the Greeks, always at enmity with the Armenians, incited the Saracens against them. Abdullah, their leader, entered Duin, where he seized upon several of the chiefs and put them in chains. He likewise caught Isaac the Pontiff and sent him in chains to Damascus. He then stripped all the great churches of Ararat of their treasure, with every valuable ornament that decorated them, and seizing David Duinensis, a Persian by origin but converted to christianity, caused



him to be crucified. He was interred in the church of St. Gregory, and numbered among the Saints commemorated by the Armenian Church.

Thus ended the seventh century, leaving the nation with its spiritual head captive in a foreign country.

The Armenians, notwithstanding, enjoyed peace for a few years under the sway of Sumpad the Pakradunian, who was appointed governor of Armenia by the Emperor Leontius <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Armen., p. 195.

EIGHTH CENTURY.

I

**Death of Isaac the Pontiff. — Elisha his successor. — The  
martyrs Vahan of Koghithen and Susan.**

In the beginning of the eighth century we find Armenia threatened by a formidable invasion of the Saracens. Mohamad Ogba, the Saracen general, being defeated, collected an overwhelming army and set out again for Armenia, determined to spare no one in his vengeance.

Isaac the Pontiff, who was still a prisoner in Damascus, hearing of the calamities that awaited his countrymen, sent to Mohamad entreating his permission to accompany him in his expedition. On his request being complied with, he set out to join the Army, but on reaching Charran he was suddenly taken ill and died. Before he expired, however, he wrote with his own hand a supplicatory letter to the Saracen general, praying him to spare the Armenians. He directed his deacon, that when he heard

his last sigh he should put this letter in his right hand. When Mohmad heard of the Pontiff's death, he ordered that his remains should not be interred until he had seen them. « For, said he, if Isaac were alive he would come to me; and since he is dead I will go to him. » He then repaired to the place where the dead Pontiff lay. On his arrival he approached the body and saluted it with words and gestures as if it were alive. The body of the Pontiff then, it is said, returned the salutation, and stretching forth its right hand, offered the letter which it held. Mohmad, exceedingly terrified, took the letter, and after reading its contents exclaimed: « Yes, thou man of God, thy desires shall be fulfilled. » He then wrote a letter of peace and reconciliation to the Armenian chiefs, and caused the remains of the Pontiff to be taken to that country by a body of Saracen troops. Isaac the Pontiff held the pontificate, including the time of his imprisonment at Damascus, twenty six years and a few months.

He was succeeded, A. D. 702, by Eliah, bishop of the Puznunes, from the city of Arjesh. This Pontiff, by his influence with the Saracens, caused the queen of the Aghuans and Nierses their Pontiff, to be banished for having accepted the Council

of Chalcedon. He also persecuted all the Chalcedonians that lay within his power.

During the pontificate of Eliah, Gashm the Saracen governor of Armenia, decoyed a number of the principal Armenian nobility into the Church of Nakhjuan, to which he set fire and burnt them alive. He then plundered their property and seized all their families. Among the captives was a boy of four years of age named Vahan, the son of Chosroes chief of Koghten. He was circumcised and educated in the Court of the Caliph. But in the course of time having succeeded to his father's estate, he returned to Armenia and reembraced Christianity, whereupon he was martyred by the Saracens. His martyrdom is yearly celebrated in the Armenian Church. In like manner also a girl of the name of Susan, daughter of Vahan the Gamsaragan, fell into the hands of the Saracens and being tortured by them in consequence of her religion, perished in Charran.

## II

John the Fourth. — A Synod in Duin. — David the First. — Tiridates the First and the Second. — Sion and the Synod held in Bardav. — Canons.

Elijah the Pontiff, after ruling the Armenian Church fourteen years and a half, died and was succeeded, A. D. 718, by John the Fourth, surnamed the Philosopher, from the village of Otzun, in the province of Dashirs, whence he is also called Otnensis. John had been from his infancy under the care of the celebrated and learned vartabied Theodore, surnamed Kurthenavor, who instructed him in all the sciences. On his attaining manhood he became so celebrated in consequence of the variety of his talents and his high cultivation, that he was universally denominated the Philosopher or Sage. He was a man of unequalled qualities, generous, candid and peaceful. In person he was tall and wellshaped, with an extremely commanding air and remarkably beautiful features. He always wore under his robes and next his skin a dress of extremely coarse sackcloth. On festivals he would carry bo-

dily discipline to such an excess, that people who beheld him were amazed.

His fame having reached the ears of Omar the Caliph, he was invited by that monarch to visit him and met with a most respectful and honourable reception.

On his elevation to the pontificate he devoted himself assiduously to restore tranquillity to the Armenian Church in which much confusion and perplexity had arisen, occasioned by three different reasons: first, the people were agitated and alarmed by two abominable sects which had recently sprung into existence and were denominated Paulites and Fantastics; secondly, much confusion arose from the irregular lives many of the clergy and laity led; thirdly, the nation was undecided as to the ritual, some desiring to conform to that of the Greeks, who administered the Lord's supper with leavened bread and wine mixed with water; who also omitted the word *crucified* in the anthem: « *Holy God, Holy and powerful, Holy and immortal (who w<sup>as</sup> rt crucified), have mercy upon us,* » and asserted that the birth of Christ should be celebrated by a distinct feast, with many other irregularities.

John the Philosopher wishing to apply a wholesome remedy to these evils, convoked a general assembly in the city of

Duin, A. D. 719, at which almost all the bishops of Armenia Major and Minor were present. After they had anathematized the Paulites and the Fantastics they enacted thirty two canons for the future government of the Church. The Pontiff shortly after in conjunction with the Syrians convened a synod, at which the Julianites were condemned.

After remaining eleven years in the pontificate he died. His successor was David the First, from the village of Aramons in the province of Godaik, A. D. 729. During his pontificate as the Saracen governor greatly harassed the Armenians he wrote to the Caliph and procured that functionary's removal. David the Pontiff, having held the reins of the Church twelve years and a half, died and was succeeded by

Tiridates the First, A. D. 741, from the village of Othmus in the province of Vanant. He was a zealous and good man, passing most of his time in prayer, in fasting, and in the exercise of acts of charity. After a pontificate of twenty three years he died.

His successor was Tiridates the Second, from the province of Tasnavoritz in Duruperan. He held his office only three years, when he died.

His successor was Sion, A. D. 767, from the village of Pavonk in the province of

Arakadzoden, a man eminently distinguished for wisdom and piety. In the year of his elevation to the pontificate he held a synod in the city of Bardav, and enacted twenty four canons for the regulation of the clergy and the Church.

CANONS OF THE SYNOD OF BARDAV:

1. *If any bishop, suffragan, or priest, neglect the faithful entrusted to his care, by seeking honours and amusements, he shall be destituted.*

2. *Bishops may not presume to make ordinations in a diocese not their own.*

3. *Bishops may not force a delinquent to give gifts to the church, but shall direct them to give to the poor with their own hands.*

4. *Bishops shall never allow suffragans or priests to erect altars, or to consecrate churches.*

5. *Bishops shall not presume to bless the oil, or to add any thing to that which has been already consecrated but they shall take it from the residence of the Patriarch every year.*

6. *Bishops shall nominate priests - doctors in theology, whose duty shall be continually to instruct the people.*

7. *Monasteries or Convents must be built in villages, where superiors ought permanently to reside.*



*Inns and almshouses ought also to be built there, and be endowed by the same villages.*

8. *The baptismal font shall be respected and be kept clean; and the water used in baptism shall not be poured in unclean places.*

9. *The priest, whose turn it is to officiate in the church, shall perform the service in a becoming manner, and shall recite the prayers without omission or interruption.*

10. *No priest who marries, nor any person who having been married twice, is afterwards consecrated priest, shall dare to fulfil the duties of the office, but shall remain in penance.*

11. *Priests should be attentive not to permit intermarriages of the faithful with the infidels.*

12. *The wafers for the holy sacrifice should be prepared by priests and not by laymen.*

13. *If any priest unite for the third time in matrimony persons who have been already twice widowed and who may have cohabited illegally, he shall be anathematized and the marriage shall be null.*

14. *The church property and furniture shall never be sold.*

15. *Monks shall not change from one monastery to another; they shall remain in the same religious house in which they took their vows, unless they are called to the direction of some diocese.*

16. *Relations may intermarry up to the fourth remove.*

17. *Hospitals should be built for those who for certain diseases are expelled from towns; and an annuity be settled on them by the people.*

18. *On a person's death, the alms or oblations for the benefit of his soul shall be given to that church and to that parish or fraternity to which he belonged, and not to others, unless a surplus remains.*

19. *If an excommunicated person dies before he is absolved no funeral ceremony shall take place at his interment.*

20. *If any catechumen dies without baptism he shall be interred without the funeral ceremony.*

21. *Suffragans shall not dare to close the church, nor to suppress the divine service.*

22. *If the governor of any village, in order to enforce the collection of taxes, causes the church to be closed, he shall be anathematized.*

23. *Those who having been carried away into slavery among infidels, have lived according to the rules of the religion of those infidels, though without renouncing their faith, shall on their return home, do penance for a year, fasting every wednesday and friday.*

24. *The following books of the Old Testament are to be reckoned as holy Scriptures :*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Genesis.</i>                             | 13. <i>Judith.</i>   |
| 2. <i>Exodus.</i>                              | 14. <i>Esther.</i>   |
| 3. <i>Leviticus.</i>                           | 15. <i>The Maccabees.</i>  |
| 4. <i>Numbers.</i>                             | 16. <i>Job.</i>  |
| 5. <i>Deuteronomy.</i>                         | 17. <i>The Psalms of David.</i>  |
| 6. <i>Joshua.</i>                              | 18. <i>The four books of Solomon.</i>  |
| 7. <i>Judges.</i>                              |  |
| 8. <i>Ruth.</i>                                | 19. <i>The books of the twelve Prophets.</i>   |
| 9. <i>The four books of Kings<sup>4</sup>.</i> | 20. <i>The books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Wisdom of Sirach.</i> |
| 10. <i>The two books of Chronicles.</i>        |  |
| 11. <i>The two books of Ezra.</i>              |  |
| 12. <i>Tobias.</i>                             |  |

Sion the Pontiff died after having presided over the church eight years.

### III

Isaiah, and other Pontiffs.

Isaiah, from the village of Eghabadrush in the province of Nig, was then elevated to the pontificate, A. D. 775. He was a man

<sup>4</sup> Including the books of Samuel.

of considerable ability and had from his infancy always resided with the reigning Pontiff. During his pontificate Armenia was reduced to so low a state by Saracen tyranny, that he fell a victim to grief; he died in the thirteenth year of his pontificate.

Stephen of Duin, a chaplain, succeeded him, A. D. 788, and died two years after.

Then Joab or Job held the pontificate; he was from the city of Ostan, and only enjoyed his dignity six months.

His successor was the aged Solomon, A. D. 791, from the province of Kegharkunis. He died in less than a year afterwards.

George surnamed Hoylorpug, from the village of Oshagan in the province of Arakadzoden, succeeded Solomon in the pontificate, A. D. 792, and ruled the Church three years, when he died.

He was succeeded, A. D. 795, by Joseph the Second surnamed Garidj, from the village of St. George in the province of Arakadzoden.

NINTH CENTURY.

I

Joseph the Pontiff and Khuzima the Governor. — David the Second. — Martyrs. — John the Fifth. — Bugha the Tyrant.

While Joseph the Second governed the Armenian Church, Khuzima the Saracen<sup>1</sup>, was sent to Armenia by the Caliph of Bagdad, as governor of the country. He governed the nation peacefully at first; but some time after, changing his manner, he proposed to Joseph the Pontiff, to purchase from him three villages which belonged to the pontificate. Joseph refusing to part with the property of the Church, the governor seized upon the village of Ardashad, one of the three in question, and on Joseph's brother threatening to appeal to the Caliph, he caused him to be strangled. This event so much affected the Pontiff that he fell sick and died, in the eleventh year of his pontificate.

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Armen., p. 202.

He was succeeded, A. D. 806, by David the Second, from the village of Gagaz, in the province of Maghagh. During the time of his pontificate, two brothers, Isaac and Joseph, whose mother was an Armenian and father a Persian, were taken by Khuzima the Governor and ordered to abjure the christian faith. On their remaining firm, they were martyred in Garin. Their commemoration is yearly held in the Armenian Church.

David the Second died after having presided over the Church twenty seven years.

He was succeeded by John the Fifth, A. D. 833, from the village of Vegayk in the province of Godaik, a good and humble character, delighting in the service of God, and living according to the most rigid rules of monastic discipline.

It was during his pontificate that the Caliph of Bagdad sent Bugha to ravage Armenia, in order to avenge the death of the late governor Abuseth, who was killed by the inhabitants of Mount Shem or Sassuns<sup>1</sup>. Bugha marched into Armenia at the head of a large body of troops, and spread death and desolation around him. Many of the inhabitants were forced to forsake christianity, or were martyred. Among

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Arm., p. 204.

these were seven men from the province of Aghpag the chief of whom was named Adom. Bugha having tried every method to induce them to renounce their faith, and seeing all his efforts ineffectual, at last ordered them to be crucified.

The execution of these and of many others, took place in the years 852 and 853. John the Pontiff subsequently appointed a day to celebrate the feast of these martyrs.

While Bugha was devastating Armenia, John the Pontiff, afraid to remain in Duin, wandered about various parts of the country. He at length found an asylum in the convent of Makenotz in the province of Kegharkunies, where he died of a broken heart, A. D. 854, after a pontificate of twenty two years.

## II

Zachariah the Pontiff. — Photius and the Council of Chalcedon. — The Synod of Shiragavan. — George the Second. — Ashod the Pakradunian is crowned king of the Armenians. — Mashdotz the Second. — John the Sixth.

His successor was Zachariah, from the village of Zag in the province of Godaik, and as a mark of the turbulence and cala-

mity of the times in which he lived, it is sufficient to say, that, as he was not in orders, he was ordained deacon and priest, and consecrated bishop and pontiff all in one day. He presided over the Church twenty one years and made many improvements in the spiritual condition of the Armenians.

It was during this pontificate and in the year of Grace 859, that the Caliph appointed Ashod the First, from the Pakradunian tribe, Governor of Armenia<sup>1</sup>.

About the year 862, Photius being Greek Patriarch at Constantinople, began to molest the Armenians on account of the Council of Chalcedon. Zachariah the Pontiff then wrote him a friendly letter, in which he explained the reasons which induced the Armenians to reject the Council of Chalcedon. To this Photius made a long reply, wherein he set forth the sound doctrine of that holy Council, and declared that whatever the Armenians had heard prejudicial to it was false. He also urged Ashod the Governor to accept this Council, and forwarded him a piece of the wood of the true Cross.

This letter and relic was brought by Vahan, or John, Archbishop of Nice, who

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Arm., p. 217.



had also received directions from the Patriarch, to convene an assembly of Bishops to discuss the matter in question.

On the arrival of Vahan in Armenia, the Pontiff and the Governor consenting, a Synod was held in Shiragavan, A. D. 862. After many subjects had been treated of, Vahan delivered a long discourse concerning the Trinity and the Incarnation, and laid before the assembly fifteen canons, containing an orthodox creed, the last of which decreed the acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon. These canons are the following :

CANONS OF THE SYNOD OF SHIRAGAVAN.

1. *There are one Nature and three Persons in the life-giver Trinity ; the Father without origin, the Son from the Father, the Holy Ghost from Their essence.*

2. *The Son of God, one of the Trinity, dwell in the Virgin's womb, and took our flesh upon Him, remaining inseparable from the Father and from the Holy Spirit.*

3. *The same Son of God, God the Word, united himself to human flesh, without confusion and without division ; and is Himself eternal God and true man.*

4. *The holy Virgin Mary is truly and perfectly Mother of God.*

5. *Christ did not assume the human person, but the nature; nor, as Nestorius falsely asserted, was he divided into two.*

6. *The two Natures, contrary to the heresy of Eutyches, are not confounded in Christ; neither was his body brought from heaven.*

7. *God the Word became man, being perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity; uniting two natures in one person; consubstantial with the Father according to his divinity, and consubstantial with us regarding his humanity; in all without sin.*

8. *The Holy Trinity and Divinity is impassible.*

9. *Christ suffered in his Body not in his Divinity.*

10. *God the Word, Jesus Christ, is Holy, Powerful, and Immortal; He was crucified for our salvation in his body; He is merciful to every one and takes away the sins, etc.*

11. *The Son of God became Son of the Virgin, in order to make the sons of man sons of God.*

12. *The soul of Christ in the Virgin's womb was glorious, and had a passible body; but incorruptible as to the tomb, as to sin, and as to the passions; i. e. not dissoluble to earth, impeccable and unimpassionable; for all that he suffered, he did voluntarily and truly.*

13. *The traditions of the Councils of Nice, Constantinople and Ephesus, are in conformity with the traditions of the Apostles and Prophets.*

14. *If any one knowing that the Council of Chalcedon and its consecutives — that is the three posterior Councils — are contrary or averse to the apostolical and prophetical traditions or to those of the three holy councils, and for human adulation or for his own profit does not anathematize them, be he anathema.*

With this canon the council intended still more to constrain the enemies of the holy Council of Chalcedon, in as much as it was not in opposition to the doctrines of the Apostles and Prophets; all those who opposed it were subject to anathema, as is plainly stated in the last canon.

15. *If any person, knowing the holy Council of Chalcedon and its consecutives; the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh councils; to be in conformity with and consentaneous to the apostolical and prophetical doctrines and to those of the three holy Councils (of Nice, Constantinople and Ephesus) yet persist in anathematizing them or in calumniating them as consentaneous to the impious Nestorius, he by so doing anathematizes himself; for it is written: He who anathematizes another without reason anathematizes himself, and may the anathema be on his head; wherefore be he anathema.*

After the synod Vahan returned to Constantinople, and Zachariah the Pontiff, by his prudent measures and praiseworthy example, succeeded in keeping the Armenians united in sentiments of religion and peace, through which he gained the respect and esteem of all. After a pontificate of twenty one years, he died.

He was succeeded by George the Second from the village of Karny, A. D. 876. He was a prudent and cheerful man, and managed the spiritual affairs of the people in a praiseworthy manner. It was during his days that Ashod the Pakradunian was crowned king of the Armenians, for which ceremony the Caliph of Bagdad sent a crown and other ornaments of royalty ; the same did also Basilus the Emperor of the Greeks.

When Ashod the king died, Sumpad his eldest son was crowned king, by consent of the Pontiff and chiefs. But he was an unfortunate king, and was betrayed by some of his own nobles. Armenia was invaded by Afshin the Persian governor of Aderbadagan, and much misery ensued. George the Pontiff, deeply grieved at these events, retired to the country of Vashburagan, where he died after a pontificate of twenty one years.

Mashdotz the Second, from the village of

Eghivart in the province of Godaik or Arakadzoden, then succeeded to the pontifical chair, A. D. 877. He was originally from the convent of Makenotz, where he had read deeply in theology, and was noted for extraordinary devotion. From this place he afterwards removed to the island of Sevan, where he built a convent and church; the latter he named the church of the Apostles. Here he assembled a number of piously disposed persons whom he instructed in theology. While he was here, disputes broke out amongst the people in consequence of the Synod of Shiragavan having accepted the council of Chalcedon. On this occasion Mashdotz wrote in defence of the Synod, severely animadverting against and anathematizing the favourers of the disputes. In the course of a few years after this circumstance he became Pontiff, but enjoyed that high honour only seven months, when he died.

John the Sixth, surnamed the Historian, was his successor, A. D. 897. He was from the village of Trashonaguerd, and was a pupil and relation of Mashdotz.

TENTH CENTURY.

I

Enmity of Yussuf. — John the Pontiff a prisoner. — Sumpad is tortured on account of his religion. — The feast of the third of June. — Stephen the Second. — Theodore the First.

In the beginning of this century we find Armenia in a dreadful state. Afshin and Yussuf, the Governors of Aderbadagan being at enmity with Sumpad the Armenian king, devastated the country with the most pitiless rage. John the Pontiff was sent by Sumpad the king to Yussuf to entreat for peace; but he was seized by the latter and confined in a dark dungeon. The Pontiff, in order to get free from his confinement, was obliged to pay a heavy ransom. Then seizing his opportunity, he escaped to the Aghuans.

At last Sumpad the king was seized by Yussuf, loaded with chains and tortured in the most horrible manner, with a view to make him deny Christ. The king, however, remained firm, and at the end death reliev-

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ing him from his torments, he expired in the odour of sanctity.

Ashod the son of the deceased king, was proclaimed king by the Armenians. But anarchy again prevailed and Yussuf once more devastated the country, destroying all those who remained firm in the Christian religion.

In consequence of the courage with which all these resisted the attempts to shake their faith, and the fortitude with which they encountered death, a feast was appointed to be held in their commemoration on the third of June. Three martyrs of this period are particularly mentioned in the old records; one named Michael, a youth of seventeen years of age, and the two others David and Gurguen, brothers, all remarkable for mental and personal endowments.

John the Pontiff during these troubles, being unable to help his countrymen, was obliged to seek refuge in the territory of Vasburagan; he here completed his history of Armenia and shortly after died, having presided over the Church twenty seven years and eight months.

Stephen the Second succeeded him, A. D. 925, in the pontifical chair, and settled himself on the island of Aghthamar; he died in the course of a year after his election.

Theodore the First then became pontiff, A. D. : 26, in the same Island. It was in the first year of his pontificate that Gagig, king of Vasburagan, wrote, but without obtaining any reply, to Tryphon patriarch of the Greeks and to the Emperor Romanus, begging that steps might be taken to bring about religious unanimity between the Greeks and Armenians.

During Theodore's pontificate Armenia was blessed with peace. Many of the clergy who had taken refuge in foreign countries returned to their native places. Several convents were built, and many of the clergy resided in them, living a holy and studious life. The regulations to which the monks inhabiting these convents were obliged to conform were these: to continue in prayer the greater part of the twenty four hours; to eat only once a day; to possess no private property.

Theodore, after a pontificate of ten years, the whole of which he passed in the Island of Aghthamar, died, A. D. ' 35.



## II

Eghishé. — Ananias Mogatzi, and Jacob bishop of Sewnies. —  
Enmity of the Greeks and persecution caused by them. —  
Vahan and the troubles on account of the Council of  
Chalcedon.

He was succeeded in the pontificate by his brother Eghishé, who also made Aghthamar the seat of his spiritual government. Five years after, owing to the calumnies which his enemies spread abroad concerning him, he was deposed; but the Armenian bishops opposed the appointment of a successor during his lifetime, and he thus exercised the pontifical authority for two years more when he died, A. D. 943.

His successor was Ananias Mogatzy, head of the fraternity of Varak. During his pontificate one Jacob bishop of Sewnies, began to disseminate doctrines and to introduce rites subversive of all church discipline, asserting also that bishops were not bound to obey the Pontiff. Ananias, to punish his contumacy, anathematized both him and his adherents, among whom were the princes and chiefs of the Sewnies. Jacob shortly after died, when the pontiff visited his diocese, and having

brought it again to obedience, he revoked the anathema. He then consecrated Vahan, from the province of Baghk, Archbishop of the Sewnies, and permitted him to have a crucifix borne before him wherever he went. Ananias then returned to Aghthamar.

In the year 944, the Greeks were incited to compel the Armenians who resided under the Greek government, to conform to the usages and rites of the Greek church. Those who submitted were confirmed again, and some were even rebaptized; but others who preferred the old ceremonies, quitted their habitations and took refuge in Armenia Major, on the frontiers of Shirag and Little Vanant. Those who escaped thither in consequence of this persecution, if accompanied by babes who had been previously baptized according to the Greek form, caused that ceremony to be again performed; imagining that the Greeks baptized only in the name of man. The hostile feeling increased, and at length became so deeply rooted as to produce an enmity between the two churches so lasting as even in our day to shew no signs of abatement. At that epoch, if any moderate Armenian proposed to bring the two nations to a community of religious sentiment, he was treated as a public enemy.

After a pontificate of twenty two years, Ananias the Pontiff died, having resided five years in Aghthamar and seventeen in Varak and Ani.

He was succeeded in the pontificate, A. D. 965, by Vahan, of the province of Baghk, Archbishop of the Sewnies, who took up his residence in the city of Arkina, on the banks of the river Akhurian near Ani, the seat of the spiritual government not having yet being established in the latter city. This pontiff having formerly acknowledged that the creed of the Council of Chalcedon was orthodox, now proceeded to decree its public acceptance, thus again bringing the Armenian Church into unanimity with the Greeks and Georgians, to whom he respectively made formal communication of the fact. Many, however, refused to accept the decision of the pontiff, and much trouble was the consequence. At an assembly held in the city of Ani, it was proposed to depose Vahan from the pontificate. He perceiving the object at which they aimed, retired secretly to the country of Vasburagan, where he was kindly received by Abusahl the king, who subsequently shared his views as to the Council of Chalcedon.

### III

Stephen the Third. — He is imprisoned. — Khatchig. — Death of Vahan the exiled Pontiff. — Gregor of Nareg. — A Synod in Ani. — Enmity of the Greeks. — Sarkis the First. — The Seat of the spiritual government is fixed in Ani.

The assembly then elected Pontiff of the Armenians, Stephen the Third, Abbot of Sevan, who immediately after fulminated anathemas against Vahan and Abusahl. Vahan thereupon anathematized Stephen and his adherents, and thus the country was filled with scandal. Stephen then, in a transport of religious fury, gathered a number of his clergy, and advanced at their head to take Vahan prisoner. Abusahl the king on the approach of this body, seized the whole and confined them in the island of Aghthamar. Some of them however repenting, were released, with the exception of Stephen who was imprisoned in the castle of Godork, where he died a few months after, in the second year of his pontificate.

On the death of Stephen, many of the Armenian clergy were willing to reinstate Vahan in the pontificate; but considering

the commotions their decision would cause, they held an assembly in the royal city of Ani, at which they elected Pontiff, Khatchig the First, bishop of the Arsharunies, A. D. 972.

Khatchig having established himself in the pontificate, built a palace in the city of Arkina and settled there in the year 990. He erected also four splendid churches on a new plan, after the designs of a celebrated Armenian architect named Tiridates. He also formed a large library there, in which the principal works of all the authors then known were deposited.

During the time of Khatchig, Vahan the Pontiff, although an exile in Vasburagan, again endeavoured to effect an union between the Greeks and the Armenians; and for this purpose communicated with the Emperors of Constantinople, but without effect. He subsequently died, A. D. 977, after a pontificate of fifteen years, reckoning the time of his retirement in Vasburagan.

One of the greatest glories of the Armenian Church in this century was Gregor of Nareg, renowned for his wisdom and sanctity.

He, together with his brother, had been brought up from his infancy in the convent of Nareg, and at the age of twenty

six years was ordained priest. The fame of his wisdom being spread all over the kingdom, he was much honoured by the king, pontiff, and grandees of the country; so that in process of time he became Abbot of the convent of Nareg, from which circumstance he was surnamed Naregatzî or Nareguensis.

Considering the division and enmity that existed between Armenians and Greeks, he attempted to unite the two churches, by persuading his countrymen to accept the holy Council of Chalcedon. In consequence of this several intolerant men stirred up the nation against him, and disputes ran so high that it was found necessary to convene an assembly of the chiefs and clergy in the city of Ani. Messengers were despatched to Gregory of Nareg to summon him to appear before the assembly, which proposed to examine his religious opinions.

On the arrival of the messengers at the convent of Nareg, it is related that Gregory received them with kindness, and ordered a repast to be prepared of roasted pigeons. The day being Friday, the messengers were offended when the pigeons were set before them, and addressing the Abbot they said: « Doctor, this day is a fast, for it is Friday. » Upon which Gregory repli-

ed: « Excuse me brethren, for I had forgotten. » Then addressing the roasted birds, he said: « Arise ye and depart, for this day is a fast. » The pigeons then, wonderful to relate, expanded their wings and flew away. The messengers observing this miracle were struck with shame and falling at the Saint's feet implored his forgiveness. They then returned to Ani and relating to the assembly the wonder they had beheld, astonished and confounded all. Many writers recorded this miracle, and the monks of Nareg also deposited an account of it, as is related, in their archives. We, however, report this merely as an anecdote, as it shews the public esteem towards the holy man.

In the mean time St. Gregory devoted himself, as is related in his biography, totally to prayer and religious meditation and increased in sanctity until he was permitted to behold, with his bodily senses, the holy Virgin with the Son of God in her arms. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, he composed a wonderful book of prayers called Nareg, a glory of the religious literature of the Armenians. He was the author also of several elegies and hymns. At the early age of twenty six he wrote commentaries on the Songs of Solomon, and on the thirty eighth chapter of the book

of Job. On his attaining his fiftieth year he died <sup>1</sup>.

About the year 990 the Greeks renewed their enmity against their Armenian fellow citizens, and persecuted them on account of the difference of their church ceremonies; much dispute arising, many letters were addressed to Khatchig the Pontiff by the Greeks. As these letters were full of insult and invective, Khatchig disdained replying to them. Some of the friends of the Pontiff, however, to his great displeasure, returned replies in his name, couched in the same unbecoming style as those of the Greeks. Khatchig after being in the pontificate nineteen years, died and was buried in Arkida, A. D. 992.

At his death an assembly was held by Gagig the king, in the city of Ani, and Sarkis the First was appointed Pontiff of the Armenians. A splendid cathedral hav-

<sup>1</sup> In the time of Gregory of Nareg, several saintly men also flourished, such as St. Macar, son of the great Armenian prince Michael. He succeeded St. Macarius in the bishopric of Antioch, and did much good while residing in that diocese. He visited Germany and Flanders.

St. Smeon an Armenian and son of a general, was no less celebrated. He was educated in a convent, where the favour of the Almighty was shown him whilst extremely young. He travelled through Italy, France, Spain and the Island of Britain, and at length died in the convent of Benedictines near the city of Mantua.



ing just been finished in the city of Ani, he made that his residence and fixed the Armenian metropolis there.

Sarkis was a man of the mildest manners and lowliest humility, and in the dignified situation of Pontiff exhibited the simplicity of a hermit; for, being a friar from the convent of Sevan, he continued to observe the same rule during the whole time of his pontificate. Having discovered some relics of the Ripsimian nuns, he built a church near the principal church of Ani, and dedicated it to them.

ELEVENTH CENTURY.

I

The Sect of the Thontraguians. — Sumpad the Thontraguian.  
— Peter the Kedatartz. — Deoskoros. — A Synod in Ani.  
— Khatchig the Second. — The Greeks endeavour to force  
the Armenians to conform to the rites of the Greek church.  
— Gregory Vegayasser. — George Lorensis. — Communi-  
cations between the Armenian Pontiff and Pope Gregory  
the Seventh. — Parsegh is elected Pontiff in Ani. — Four  
Pontiffs at once.

While Sarkis the Pontiff was peacefully governing the Church, the pernicious doctrine of the Thontraguians was revived in Armenia. This sect had its origin about 160 years before; its author was one Sumpad, a man of licentious morals, who resided sometime in the village of Thontrag in the province of the Abahunians, whence he derived his surname Thontraguian.

Sumpad was a layman, but assumed the habit of a bishop on commencing to disseminate his opinions. He taught that religion was a farce and the priesthood vain; to confirm which he did not perform any or-

dination. He denied every thing belonging to the true faith. He taught that all authority was unjust, and that absolute liberty should be the rightful guide of humanity. That there was no sin, and therefore there should be no law. He was a voluptuary and taught that sensual pleasure was the only positive good.

Many people of both sexes embraced his doctrine, and took him for their master. His disciples were divided into three classes. The first residing with him at Thontrag were called Thontraguians; the second living in the village of Thulayl, were designated Thulaylians; the third, people of the village of Khenus who took the name of Khenunians. This sect neither baptized, prayed, nor performed any of the sacred ceremonies of Christianity, despising all forms, but retaining the name of Christians.

On the first appearance of this sect the Armenian Pontiffs fulminated their anathemas against its members. It, however, continued to exist till the time of Gregory Makistros, who succeeded in completely rooting it out.

Sarkis the Pontiff died shortly after issuing an anathema against this sect, A. D. 1019, having held the pontifical authority twenty seven years.

His successor was Peter the First, surnamed Kedatartz brother of the Pontiff Khatchig the First. He was a man of great wisdom and holiness, and enjoyed a high reputation in all the surrounding nations. He received the surname of Kedatartz from the fact, as the legends inform us, of having miraculously turned the current of a river toward its source. For, in the year 1022, having been sent, by John the Armenian king, on a mission to the Emperor Basil <sup>1</sup>, the Emperor received him with great honour. When Christmas arrived, at which time it was customary to perform the ceremony of blessing the waters, the Emperor, who had been made to believe that the Armenian form of blessing was vain and ridiculous, directed Peter to perform the customary ceremony on a river that was contiguous. The holy Pontiff then proceeded in presence of all to pronounce the benediction, in the act of which, while he was pouring out the holy chrism and making the sign of the Cross, the current of the river stopped, and the waters rolled back toward their source, to the astonishment of all the beholders. The Emperor, on observing this miracle, was amazed, and treating the Pontiff with all honour

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Arm., p. 262.

and respect, permitted him to return to his country. Some time after, Peter retired to Sebastia, to which city Sennacherib, the king of Vasburagan had a few years before transferred his seat of government.

Thence he returned to Ani; but the year following hearing that Sennacherib was sick to death, he repaired again to Sebastia. From this place he removed to Gars, whence he returned again to Ani.

The inhabitants of this city, however, as well as the king John regarded him unfavourably on his arrival in consequence of the long period that he had been absent from them, which the Pontiff observing, left Ani and repaired to Vasburagan. Here he remained shut up in the convent of Zor four years, at the expiration of which, the Armenians, indignant at his continual absence from his duties, decoyed him into their power and imprisoned him in the fortress of Petchni, where he remained one year and five months.

The king then, A. D. 1035, sent for Deoskoros, Abbot of Sanahin, and appointed him Pontiff of the Armenians; but the bishops would not recognise his authority; neither would they permit his name to be mentioned before the Altar, as it was customary to do with the reigning Pontiff; nor to hold any ordination of bishops.

Deoskoros, however, seeing both clergy and people disgusted at his nomination, made himself still more unpopular by ordaining and consecrating many of the lowest and most ignorant people, bishops, and by restoring several bishops to their sees who had been formerly expelled for their vices.

The clergy observing these irregularities in the Church, convened an assembly, from whence they issued an anathema against the king and chiefs who had raised Deoskoros to the pontificate. The king together with the chiefs, alarmed at the curse thus openly pronounced against them, wished to restore Peter to his pontifical chair, promising him obedience in all things; but he would not listen to them.

The king then, having consulted his chiefs, ordered an assembly to be held in Ani, and invited Joseph, the Pontiff of the Ag-huans, to preside over it. In this assembly, 4,000 of the most respectable of the clergy and laity being present, the conduct of Deoskoros was examined and found blameworthy; he was therefore degraded and sent in confinement to his convent of Sannahin, after having enjoyed the pontifical dignity one year and a few months. All those were likewise punished who had been consecrated by Deoskoros, and canonical

penances appointed them. Then the assembly again confirmed Peter in the pontifical chair.

After this event Armenia suffered much from the Greeks and the infidels, until the reigning power of the Pakradunian dynasty was suppressed by the Greek Emperor. In the midst of the calamities that ensued, Peter the Pontiff, after much suffering, died, A. D. 1058, having arrived at a very advanced age, and having held the pontificate for a period of 40 years, reckoning from the time of his election to his death.

Khatchig the Second, Peter's nephew, was, on the death of the latter elected pontiff in the city of Ani.

Constantine the Greek Emperor, on his accession to the imperial throne, sent for Khatchig, and demanded an account of the property of Peter the late Pontiff, conceiving that the latter had come into possession of the treasures of the Armenian kings. Khatchig replying that he possessed nothing, the Emperor directed him to pay a yearly sum to the Greek government for the office he held, which he refused to do. Hereupon two individuals came forward and offered to pay annually an enormous sum to Constantine, if he would appoint them respectively Governor and Pontiff of the Armenians. They, however, were

unable to perform this; for on the same day one fell dangerously ill and the other died. Khatchig afterwards remained three years in Constantinople, at the expiration of which he went to Thavplur, where he remained seven months.

The Emperor then proceeded to compel the Armenians to conform to the rites of the Greek church. He sent to Sebastia for the sons of king Sennacherib Adom and Abusahl, and on their arrival at Constantinople disclosed to them his intention. He then assembled an assembly of the Greek clergy to concert with him the means for bringing the Armenians to conformity. In this assembly, after some discussion, an Armenian vartabed, named Jacobus Sanahinensis, or Karapnensis, who accompanied Adom and Abusahl from Sebastia, rose and presented to the Emperor a letter containing an avowal of union between the two creeds and rites. The assembly was thereupon dissolved, and the Emperor sending for Gagig, the exiled king of the Armenians, joyfully communicated to him the contents of the letter he had received.

Gagig on hearing this replied, that the letter was nothing, as it did not contain the sentiment of the nation but was the mere production of a single individual. Then with the Emperor's consent, he convened



another assembly, composed entirely of Armenian clergy, and by their assistance drew up a statement of the religious creed of the Armenians; in which he declared, that it was impossible to force the Armenians to change their national rite for that of the Greeks. Thus was all hope of union destroyed and the Greeks irritated, treated the Armenians worse then ever, regarding them with even greater hatred than they did the mussulman unbelievers.

Khatchig the Pontiff, who resided in the city of Thavplur, much affected on account of the sufferings of the nation, died after a pontificate of six years, A. D. 1064.

On the death of this Pontiff the Greeks manifested a desire to leave the Armenians without a Pontiff, hoping that, left to themselves, they would soon become converts to the Greek rite. However this did not occur; for, by the influence of some favourite of the Empress Eudoxia, the Armenians were empowered to appoint a Pontiff. In consequence of which an assembly of the clergy was held in the city of Zamentav, where Gregory Vegayasser, son of Gregorius Magistrus, was elevated to the dignity of Pontiff, A. D. 1065. Gregory was admirably fitted for this high office, having from his infancy been engaged in literary pursuits. When young he married and was much

honoured by the Emperor, who conferred upon him the title of Duke, and on the death of his father he succeeded him in his government of Mesopotamia. Some time after this appointment he became disgusted with the world, and relinquishing his government, and separating himself from his wife, he embraced a monastic life. His original name was Vahram, but on his being elected Pontiff he assumed the name of Gregory, to indicate that the chair of his ancestor St. Gregory the Illuminator was reestablished. He was surnamed Vegayasser ( lover of martyrs ) from his having compiled the memoirs of the Christian martyrs.

Gregory the Pontiff, six years after his appointment to the spiritual dignity, seeing the suffering of his countrymen, both from the invasions of Persians as well as from the tyranny of the Greeks, and being unable to apply effectual remedies, abdicated and appointed one George Lorensis, a vartabied from Kukars, his successor. He then retired to the Black Mountain in the regions of Taurus, where with a few friars he took up his residence.

The Armenians, however, still regarded him as their Pontiff, and in all cases of emergency applied to him for advice. George Lorensis feeling offended at this, took such

imprudent measures as rendered him odious to the whole nation.

This being observed by Gregory, he convened an assembly of the clergy in the Black mountain, and deposed George from the pontificate, after his enjoying it two years. Gregory was then induced to reassume his office, and fixing himself at Mudarasun there exercised the pontifical dignity<sup>1</sup>.

Gregory, shortly after his resumption of the pontifical chair, visited the city of Ani, where after residing a few months, he appointed Parsegh his nephew to be his Vicar and retired to the Black Mountain. From thence he wrote to Pope Gregory the Seventh, and having received a friendly answer he proceeded to visit him at Rome. Here he met with a very kind reception; he had several conversations with the Pope, and acquainted him with the religious ceremonies of the Armenians.

After residing at Rome a few months Gregory went to Jerusalem, and thence to Memphis, where he stayed a whole year and

<sup>1</sup> About this time there resided in the city of Honi a Vartabied named Sarkis, who exercised the control of the Church in that place with the title of Pontiff. After remaining in that capacity three years he died and was succeeded by one Theodore surnamed Alakhosig, on account of the sweetness of his voice. Neither these two, nor George Lorensis, are reckoned among the regular Armenian Pontiffs.

appointed another of his nephews, Gregorius, prelate; he then returned to the Black Mountain and abode in the convent of Arek.

At this period of our history, A. D. 1080, the Rubenian dynasty was founded in Cilicia by Ruben, a relation of the last king of the Armenians <sup>1</sup>.

Gregory the Pontiff being at this time in Mount Taurus in Cilicia, the eastern Armenians considered themselves totally without a head to their Church; and they therefore wrote to him and obtained his sanction to the election of his nephew Parsegh, then his vicar in Ani, to the pontificate.

Two years after this event, a prince of the name of Philartus having settled in Marash, caused Paul, Abbot of the convent of Varak, to be consecrated Pontiff of the Church in that district.

The number of Pontiffs now amounted to four; viz. Gregory Vegayasser in the region about Mount Taurus; Parsegh his nephew in Ani, Theodore in Honi, and Paul in Marash. These were at continual enmity with each other, causing much confusion amongst the Armenians. Paul, however, being of a lowly disposition, when he perceived the hatred which his elevated situation drew upon him from the others, relin-

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Arm., p. 287.

quished it and retired to his convent. The nation at large acknowledged Gregory alone as Pontiff. They regarded Parsegh as his deputy or vicar.

At this time many of the Armenian clergy, not being able to endure the tyranny of the infidels who ruled over their country, took refuge in Cylicia and entered the convents that were erected there, in the regions of the Black Mountain. In the mean time Jerusalem was captured by the Latins. Gregory Vegayasser was at that time in Jerusalem, where, although much annoyed by the confusion that took place, he escaped unhurt and retired to the convent of Arek in the Black Mountain, where he collected around him a number of learned Armenians, Greeks and Syrians, with whom he remained long engaged in the translation of various foreign works.

TWELFTH CENTURY.

I

**The Zerazadig or wrong Easter. — Parsegh succeeds to Gregory Vegayasser. — Gregory the Third. — The origin of the pontificate of Aghthamar. — Gregory and the assembly at Jerusalem. — The pontificate at Hromgla. — Nierses the Graceful. — The union of the Armenian and Greek Churches is proposed. — Gregory the Fourth. — Assembly. — Dudéorty a rebel. — Correspondance between the pontiff Gregory and Pope Lucius. — The Latin Mitre is adopted by the Armenian bishops. — The convent of St. James at Jerusalem. — Gregory the Fifth. — Gregory the Sixth. — Nierses Lampronensis. — Conrad Archbishop of Magunzia and his three conditions.**

In the beginning of this century the dominion of the Armenians in Cilicia was strengthened by the warlike dispositions of Thoros the First, who continually repulsed the Greeks his enemies, endeavoured to keep the Armenians in peace.

In the year 1102, however, dissension arose between the Armenians and the Syrians on one side, and the Greeks and Latins on the other in consequence of the wrong Easter — vulgarly called *Zerazadig*

— the latter celebrating the Easter feast a week before the former. According to the Armenian calendar, this difference in observing Easter happens once in every ninety five years and on this occasion furnished an opportunity to the Greeks for harassing the Armenians by forcing them to celebrate the Easter festival with themselves; for their envy and hostile feeling had been greatly excited by the flourishing state of the kingdom under Thoros. The Pontiff Gregory Vegayasser having been consulted by the Armenians with regard to the propriety of celebrating Easter with the Greeks, answered that it was becoming to adhere to those customs which had been established by their ancestors. Thereupon some kept Easter according to their calendar; others joined the Greeks and proved afterwards more virulent antagonists than the Greeks themselves.

Gregory Vegayasser shortly after took up his residence in the Red convent at Raban, near the city of Kesun. Here he fell sick and sending for Parsegh the Pontiff and Prince Basilius the Crafty, gave them charge of his nephew's Abirad's two sons, Gregory and Nierses, whom he had hitherto brought up with the greatest care, and who had early shown signs of piety and superior intelligence. He expressed the desire that at

Parsegh's death, Gregory the elder of these two youths should succeed to the pontificate. Becoming worse he received the sacrament and died, A. D. 1105, having enjoyed the dignity of Pontiff forty years.

Parsegh, by the death of his uncle Gregory, was put in possession of the full power of Pontiff, and he exercised the functions of that office henceforward, sometimes in the desert of Shughr, and sometimes in the city of Edessa. He kept the youths Gregory and Nierses with him, and carefully educated them. Gregory was in due time ordained priest.

Parsegh died in the convent of the desert of Shughr after having enjoyed the pontifical dignity thirty one years, during eight of which he exercised the office of sole ruler of the Armenian Church.

He was succeeded, A. D. 1113, by Gregory, the son of Abirad, agreeably to the wishes of the late Pontiff Gregory Vegayasser.

Gregory the Third, although but twenty years of age at the time of his elevation to the pontifical dignity, was already celebrated for his learning, and for the wisdom and piety which all his actions displayed. When his election and consecration were announced to the churches, David, the son of one Thornig, then archbishop of Aghtha-



mar, refused to acknowledge him, but with the aid of five bishops, he caused himself to be consecrated Pontiff in the convent of Zor. This coming to the knowledge of Gregory, he convened a large assembly of the clergy, amounting to more than 5500 persons, who by common consent rejected the pseudo-pontiff, and anathematized both him and his adherents. In the same assembly it was also enacted, that henceforward an element indispensable to the validity of the election of a new pontiff should be the consent of the four sees; viz. Haghpad, Thaddeus, Petchny and Dathev. David, however, continued to retain his assumed dignity in Aghthamar, and after his death others illegally succeeded him and succeed until this day with the same title of Pontiffs.

A few years afterwards, Gregory removed from the Red convent in the desert of Shughr, and established himself in the castle of Zovk his paternal inheritance. Having much improved this castle, and newly fortified it, he established the seat of his spiritual government there, A. D. 1125, and raised his brother Nierses the Graceful, to the Episcopal dignity.

About the year 1141, a Nuncio from the Pope of Rome arrived at Antioch where the Latins held an assembly to which Gregory was invited. The Nuncio immediately after-

wards went to Jerusalem; and as the pontiff Gregory was under a vow to visit that city, he accompanied him. Another assembly was held there, when a discussion taking place respecting the Armenian religious ceremonies, Gregory distinguished himself by an able speech which conciliated and pleased all parties. On the Pontiff's return to Zovk, the Latins wrote many commendatory letters to the Pope concerning him; and the Pope thereupon sent him a pontifical sceptre and veil, accompanied by a letter expressive of high consideration.

In the year 1146 <sup>1</sup>, the Scythians beginning to make inroads in the territory of the Armenians, Gregory quitted the Castle of Zovk, and accompanied by his brother Nierses and all the clergy belonging to the pontificate, went to the city of Hromgla, then in the possession of the Latins. There he established himself and built a pontifical residence and a splendid church in the form of a Cupola.

Having arrived at an extreme old age Gregory convened an assembly of the clergy at Hromgla, and consecrated his brother Nierses, Pontiff of the Armenians. Three months after he died, A. D. 1166,

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Armen., p. 302.

after a pontificate of 53 years; his remains were interred at Hromgla.

Nierses the Graceful on his elevation to the pontifical chair, with much zeal and activity set about improving the condition of the people. He sent out missionaries to the dispersed Armenians, settled in various and distant parts of the world. He wrote an epistle to all the nation, both clergy and laity, full of inspiration and wisdom wherein he exhorted all to rectitude of conduct. He made excellent regulations in order to remedy the irregularities which had crept into the Church, in consequence of the destruction of the kingdom of Armenia. He wrote also many books, regulated the divine service and composed many hymns. And in consequence of the mild and gentle manner with which he exercised his functions, and the peculiar elegance and sweet tone of his literary productions, he was surnamed Shnorhaly or the Graceful. He was also called *Glakensis*, as he resided in the fortress of *Hromgla*.

In the year 1168, Nierses, through the medium of Duke Alexius, son-in-law of the Emperor Comnenus, endeavoured to effect an union between the Greek and the Armenian Churches. To that end he wrote many letters to the Emperor and to the Greek Patriarch at Constantinople, who eventually

sent a commission to concert measures with him.

The proposals brought back by the commission being found acceptable, letters from both Emperor and Patriarch containing their consent to the union contemplated, were despatched to Hromgla. The Pontiff then summoned an assembly inviting all the Armenian bishops for the occasion. But while he was thus busily engaged in, he was suddenly taken ill, and died in the 72<sup>d</sup> year of his age and eighth of his pontificate, A. D. 1173. He was numbered among the saints of the Armenian Church and his annual commemoration was appointed to be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August.

On the death of Nierses, Gregory the Fourth surnamed Degha (the Boy) his nephew, by unanimous consent succeeded to the pontificate. He was a very wise and virtuous man, beloved and honoured by all people. The Emperor on hearing of the death of Nierses and of the election of Gregory, wrote to the latter condoling with him on the loss he had suffered, and exhorting him to carry into execution the union proposed by his predecessor. After some correspondence on this subject Gregory convened an assembly at Tarsus, where Nierses Lampronensis, a relation of the deceased Nierses, made a splendid oration.

The Greek Metropolitan also convened an assembly at Constantinople, which established the conditions upon which the union contemplated could alone be effected. These were, that the Armenian Church should accept the council of Chalcedon, and confess two distinct natures in Christ.

On the receipt of the letter containing these conditions another assembly, consisting of the Pontiff of the Aghuans, thirty three bishops and a great number of priests, was convened in the city of Hromgla, A. D. 1179. These, supported by several archbishops, who though absent, had sent in their adhesion in writing, unanimously agreed to accept the Council of Chalcedon and to admit distinctly two natures in Christ. They then wrote to the Emperor and Greek council the affirmative result of their deliberations; but their messenger was impeded by the disturbed state of the districts through which the road to Constantinople lay, and was obliged to return to Hromgla. Shortly after news arrived of the Emperor Manuel's death, which untimely event unfortunately but effectually put an end to all further steps in favour of the wished-for union.

In spite of so much unanimity and good feeling, when the news of the proceedings of the assembly reached the Zorakied

and Sanahin, a great tumult ensued amongst the inhabitants. A friar of the convent of Sanahin, named Gregory Dudéorty, wrote a rebellious letter to the Pontiff, who returned him a very mild but wise reply. This failed to produce a proper effect on Dudéorty and he caused a number of people to renounce all obedience to Gregory and to elect Parsegh bishop of Ani, as their spiritual chief. The majority of the Armenians, however, as well as the people of Ani, unanimously approved of Gregory measures, and continued to obey him as their Pontiff.

In the year 1184, the Greeks again grown hostile to the Armenians, in order to create disturbances represented the latter to the Latins as followers of the heresies of Eutyches. On this being made known to the Pontiff Gregory, he wrote a letter to Pope Lucius, stating what hatred the Greeks bore his countrymen, and begging that the Latins would pay no attention to their aspersions. He also requested the Pope to send him the regulations of the Romish Church. Lucius replied by observing that the Armenians should conform to the practice in use amongst all true Christians, whether in the East or the West, of mixing a little water with the wine of the Eucharist, and of

celebrating the birth of our Lord on the 25<sup>th</sup> December. He also sent the Pontiff a copy of the regulations of the Romish Church, with a mitre, a splendid pallium, and a small sash considered to be the chief distinction among ecclesiastical ornaments. From this circumstance the substitution of the Latin for the Greek mitre took place, the bishops having previously worn the latter.

In the year 1187 Yussuf Salahadin having taken the city of Jerusalem from the Latins, he wished to appropriate the convent and church of St. James, which belonged to the Armenians. The latter, however, at the expense of immense bribes saved their property.

Gregory the Pontiff after making many regulations and improvements in the Armenian Church, and building a splendid church in Hromgla, which he dedicated to St. Gregory the Illuminator, died, A. D. 1193, at the age of sixty, having held the pontificate twenty years. He was buried in Hromgla.

Gregory the Fifth, nephew of the late Pontiff, although very young, was elevated to the pontifical dignity by order of prince Leo. Some opposition to his appointment was made, but unavailingly, by Nierses Lampronensis, not only on account of his

youth but also of his incapacity. Time proved, however, that he was not without reason; the young Pontiff after going on very well for a year, began to show his evil propensities, which causing general disgust, complaints were made against him to prince Leo. The prince thereupon caused him to be arrested and placed in confinement in the castle of Gobidar. After four months imprisonment he attempted to escape. But in letting himself down from the battlements he slipped and being precipitated to the ground was killed on the spot; from this circumstance he was surnamed « The Precipitated. »

He was succeeded in the pontificate, A. D. 115, by Gregory the Sixth, surnamed Abirad, nephew of Nierses the Graceful, a man of mature age, and of wise and virtuous principles. The inhabitants of Haghpad and Sanahin, desiring to place their own favourite Parsegh Aniensis in the pontifical chair opposed the elevation of Gregory. Leo the Prince, however, would not listen to them; whereupon the partisans of Parsegh vented their anger on Nierses Lampronensis, conceiving that he had some hand in the election of Gregory the Sixth, and wrote complaints but uselessly, against him to the Prince Leo.

In the year 1197, the « *Zerazadig* » or



wrong easter, again occurred, and again furnished occasion to the Greeks to persecute the Armenians situated under their control. Gregory, upon learning this, sent Lampronensis to Constantinople with a letter to the Emperor Alexis Angelus, supplicating him to put a stop to the persecution. Lampronensis on arriving at Constantinople was received with much honour, yet could obtain nothing satisfactory from the Emperor and therefore he returned to Cilicia. He died shortly afterwards at the age of forty six years. He was numbered among the Saints of the Armenian Church and a yearly commemoration was ordered by Gregory the Pontiff. The persecution continuing, many Armenians were forced to embrace the Greek rite, and others were expelled from the territory as unbaptized infidels.

In the year 1199, the coronation of Prince Leo king of the Armenians took place<sup>1</sup>. On this occasion Pope Celestinus the Third sent Conrad, Archbishop of Moguntia, to Cilicia with a magnificent crown. On the arrival of Conrad he was met by Leo and Gregory the Pontiff, to whom he proposed for their acceptance three conditions, to which the Pope con-

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Arm., p. 308.

ceived all true Christians ought to agree. The first was to celebrate the principal festivals on the day they happen to fall, as is done throughout christendom. Secondly, that divine service should be performed publicly in the church, and that the people should never be kept outside during the celebration of Mass. Thirdly, not to break the fast on Easter eve, in order to avoid scandals. Leo promised to agree, but Conrad required that at least twelve bishops should promise on oath to do so. This was done, and thereupon Leo was publicly crowned king in the presence of all the clergy and chief personages of the land.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

I

John the Seventh. — Illegal elections of Pontiffs. — David the Third. — Zacharia's request to have divine service performed in his camp. — John restored. — The Latin clergy driven from Cilicia by king Leo. — Constantine the First. — The Assembly of Sis and the canon for Extreme Unction.

In the beginning of this century the Armenian rule in Cilicia being still prosperous, Gregory the Pontiff died in the convent of Arka-Gaghin, A. D. 1202, having ruled over the Armenian Church seven years.

He was succeeded by John the Seventh, Archbishop of Sis, who took up his residence in Hromgla. He was called the Majestic on account of the stateliness of his deportment.

The bishops of Armenia Minor dissatisfied with his election, appointed Ananias, bishop of Sebastia, to be their Pontiff. The people of Shirag also were not pleased with John and therefore made Parsegh of Ani their

spiritual leader. As king Leo took no steps to prevent these illegal elections, John began to look upon him with suspicion, and at length totally disregarded his orders. Irritated thereat, the king convened an assembly of bishops in the city of Sis, and deposed him from the pontificate, one year only having elapsed since his election.

He was succeeded by David the Third, A. D. 1203, from Arka-Gaghin, who took up his residence at Sis. Thus there were now four Pontiffs in Armenia, but they did not at all interfere with each other.

In the same year Zachariah Spasalar, an Armenian, General of the Georgians, being continually engaged in warfare, wished to have a portable altar in order to have mass regularly celebrated in his camp. He in consequence wrote to king Leo, and, not being aware of David's succession, to John the Pontiff requesting their sanction thereto. The king having consulted David, they convened an assembly of the clergy in Sis which sanctioned Zachariah's request and drew up eight articles for the guidance of the Armenians residing in Georgia.

These articles were the following:

1. *The Mass shall be celebrated with the assistance of deacons and clerks, and with priestly vest-*

*ments, as was formerly the custom in our nation and as is usual among all christians.*

*2. In camp, the celebration of Mass is permitted under a tent and on a moveable altar.*

*3. Mass may be celebrated not only for the dead, but also for the living.*

*4. In the dominion of the Greeks and Georgians the festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin may be celebrated in the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, on which day of the week it may happen to fall; likewise the festival of the holy Cross may be held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September.*

*5. On the eves of Epiphany and Easter, fasting shall last until evening, when it may be broken by the use of fish and oil only.*

*6. Pictures representing our Lord and the Saints shall be honoured.*

*7. No person shall be admitted to deacon's orders who has not previously been ordained clerk.*

*8. Monks shall never possess any property in particular; they shall live in community in the monasteries and never eat meat.*

In the meantime John, who had received Zachariah's letter, promptly despatched a tent in the form of a cupola and representing a church in miniature, as well as an altar of marble and every thing requisite to adorn it; these he accom-

panied by a bishop named Minas, three priests, four deacons and several choristers, at the same time authorizing Zachariah by letter to carry out all his wish.

On the receipt of these Zachariah convened an assembly of bishops and monks in the city of Lory, to whom he communicated the success of his application; many made objections, others approved. Some days after, Zachariah caused the sacrifice of the Altar to be performed in the open air in camp, as if actually in a church. Some disturbances were created by the innovation, but he succeeded in tranquilizing and appeasing all.

On intelligence reaching Cylicia of the opposition made to the open air service and of the concomitant misunderstandings, Leo and John were much vexed and referred to each other for information. This was happily the means of effecting their reconciliation. David the Pontiff dying shortly afterwards, having held the pontificate three years, and being immediately followed to the tomb by Ananias Pontiff of Sebastia, John was reinstated in the pontifical chair.

About the year 1207, disputes broke out between Leo and the Latins residing in his dominions; which ended in his driving the whole of them, clergy as well as laity, out of Cylicia. A correspondence then passed

between him, the Pope, and the Emperor of Germany, on the subject; but Leo was inflexible, and he would not even listen to John the Pontiff, to whom the Pope had also written, who endeavoured earnestly to persuade him to revoke his decision, or at least to mitigate its severity.

Twelve years afterwards John the Pontiff, surnamed the Majestic, died, A. D. 1219, having held the pontificate eighteen years.

He was succeeded by Constantine the First, a native of Partzerpert, a wise and virtuous man, who devoted himself entirely to the good of his people.

During this and the preceding age public morality in all parts of Christendom was exceedingly lax, nor were the clergy by any means exempt from the universal depravity. In the west many assemblies were at different times held for the purpose of promoting a general reform, and in Armenia, also about the year 1243, Constantine the Pontiff convened one in the city of Sis, at which not only ecclesiastics but also Hethum the king with the chiefs of the nation attended.

By this assembly twenty five canons were enacted, with a view not only to curbing the general licentiousness of the laity, but also for the better government of the Church.

In compliance with the request of the Pope of Rome and in conformity with a former regulation of John the Philosopher, the last of these canons contained the prescriptions concerning the administration of Extreme Unction.

A copy of these canons with a letter of benediction from the Pontiff was sent to the clergy of Armenia Major, who approved of and adopted them, although the customary opposition was not wanting. The canons were the following:

CANONS OF THE ASSEMBLY OF SIS.

1. *Holy orders shall be conferred without money.*
2. *Only those who bear highest recommendations shall be promoted to the rank of bishop.*
3. *Bishops shall be consecrated not under the age of thirty; lay priests at twentyfive, and deacons at twenty.*
4. *Only the worthy shall be ordained priests and deacons.*
5. *Priests shall perform the Sacraments of the Church fasting, except in case of danger of life.*
6. *The Sacraments of the Church shall be administered with respect.*
7. *The font for baptism shall be fixed in the church.*



8. *Consanguineous marriages shall not be permitted until the seventh remove.*

9. *Bishops or priests shall not presume to perform their office, without permission, in a diocese not their own.*

10. *Instructors shall be appointed in all places.*

11. *The holy Scriptures shall be transcribed only by learned and orthodox persons.*

12. *Bishops shall hold a visitation twice every year.*

13. *Aged and learned priests shall be appointed confessors ; their duty shall also be to exhort the people every sunday to confession.*

14. *The holy Sacrament shall never be carried to the sick without a censer and wax candles.*

15. *Prostitutes and diviners shall be punished.*

16. *Blasphemers shall be punished by civil judgement.*

17. *Fasts shall be kept without making use of fish and oil, except in case of sickness.*

18. *Should priests addict themselves to trade or hunting, they shall be deprived of the cure of souls.*

19. *The people shall not elect their own curate, except with the permission of the bishop.*

20. *Once a year the priests shall, with peculiar attention examine the conduct of their people, to know how they progress, or in what they lack.*

21. *The priests' incomes shall be supplied by the people.*

22. *Priests shall provide for the bishops.*

23. *Likewise the bishops shall provide for the wants of the pontifical chair.*

24. *The two prayers of the morning and afternoon services, i. e. « We offer thanks to Thee o Lord our God, » and « Hear our prayers, » — at the end of which we sing the « Holy God, » shall be finished in the person of the Son by adding at the end the words « Christ our God; » so that it may be seen evidently, that the words « Who hast been crucified » are said of the Son.*

25. *The Sacrament of Extreme Unction shall be performed only with oil blessed by the priest; as was prescribed by the great Pontiff John the Philosopher, successor to the Pontiff Eliah.*

## II

A Roman Nuncio sent to Cylicia. — Doctrine of the Holy Ghost. — Jacob the First. — Relics of St. Nierses. — Constantine the Second. — Stephen the Fourth. — Zerazadig. — The Egyptians and St. Gregory's hand. — Gregory the Seventh. — Pontifical residence in Sis. — Anathema against the See of Aghthamar annulled. — Armenian liturgy.

Pope Innocent after this assembly sent, A. D. 1248, a Nuncio to Cylicia, with letters to king Hethum and to the Pontiff Cons-

tantine. The object of his mission was to enquire into the religious ceremonies and traditions of the Armenians, as some aspersions had been cast on them. In the discussion that took place, the Armenian clergy declared that with regard to the essential points of the Christian belief, they were perfectly in unison with all the Christians, but in regard to the ceremonies in use they declared it was impossible to make any change, the nation being accustomed to them for several centuries, and so much the more as they contained nothing contrary to right doctrine or morality.

Two years after this, Pope Innocent wrote an encyclical to all the eastern nations, wherein he proposed the acceptance of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son as admitted by the Latins. A copy of this letter having been forwarded to king Hethum a Synod was convened by the Pontiff Constantine in the city of Sis, where the proposal being laid before the bishops and clergy, was, after a little discussion, accepted.

The clergy of Armenia Major on receiving notification of the decision of the synod all acquiesced declaring in reply that it was perfectly consistent with the holy writings and with the sentiments of the

Fathers of the Church. The Pontiff Constantine then wrote to the Pope to intimate the acceptance by the Armenians of the doctrine of the emanation of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son.

Constantine the Pontiff died at a very advanced age, A. D. 1267, after governing the Armenian Church forty seven years. The pontifical chair after remaining for a few months vacant was, A. D. 1268, filled by Jacob the First of Tarsus, who took up his residence in Hromgla, where also being born he was surnamed Glayensis. He was a wise, virtuous and very learned man. He caused numerous copies of the General Epistle of St. Nierses the Graceful to be transcribed and sent them to all the churches within his spiritual jurisdiction, directing the priests to read it often and observe the rules it prescribed.

During the pontificate of Jacob, A. D. 1272, the relics of St. Nierses the Great were discovered in the village of Thil. Thereupon Leo the king raised a magnificent church on the spot and dedicated it to his memory. Jacob the Pontiff died in the year 1287, after a pontificate of nineteen years.

Constantine the Second, Archbishop of Cesarea succeeded him. He was from the village of Gaduk, but educated in the

church of Sis, on account of which he was called Sisensis. Three years after, however, a difference took place between him and Hethum the king, and succeeding disputes were carried to such an extremity that the king thought proper to convene a synod, by which Constantine was destituted and banished.

He was succeeded by Stephen the Fourth, from the village of Khakh, in the province of Egueghiatz. He was called Hromglaensis, for having been educated in the pontifical residence at Hromgla. He was the last pontiff who resided in Hromgla.

Two years after, A. D. 1292, discords again broke out in Armenia concerning the wrong Easter or Zerazadig which then occurred. Some wished to celebrate it with the Greeks on the sixth of April, others on the thirteenth of the same month. Hethum the king and Stephen the Pontiff, seeing that each party obstinately persisted in its opposition to the other, convened a synod of bishops and Vartabieds in the city of Sis, where having established the epoch by accurate calculation, they decreed that Easter should commence on the sixth of April of that year. The inhabitants of Armenia Major, however, according to their usual custom commemorated it on the thirteenth of the month.

In the year 1292, the Egyptians having invaded Armenia, laid siege to the strong city of Hromgla, which at length they captured and sacked. Hundreds of the inhabitants were butchered and more carried into captivity. Among the latter was Stephen the Pontiff. The churches, together with the pontifical residence, were plundered and the Egyptians carried off the hand of St. Gregory the Illuminator. It is related however that dreadful diseases having broken out among the Egyptians, their chief was convinced that the vengeance of the Almighty was upon them, and therefore restored the sacred relic together with the church furniture they had seized, besides releasing all the Christian captives. Stephen the Pontiff, however, died through grief in Egypt before the captives were released, having held the pontificate four years.

Gregory the Seventh, from the city of Anarzaba, then became Pontiff, A. D. 1294. Hromgla, the usual residence of the pontiffs, being destroyed, he took up his residence in the city of Sis, which was thenceforward constituted the seat of the spiritual government of the Armenians. Gregory was on that account surnamed *Sisensis*.

It was during his pontificate, or perhaps

some time before, that king Hethum caused the anathema hitherto in force against the pontificate of Aghthamar to be annulled, and peace was made between the two pontificates. He also decreed that the Pontiff of Aghthamar should thenceforward be independent of spiritual control in his own diocese. Gregory the Pontiff being a man of meek and admirable character, far from taking umbrage thereat, lived on the most friendly terms with the Pontiff of Aghthamar.

His endeavours to modify the Armenian Ritual and to render it more similar to those of the Latins and Greeks, produced much discontent and provoked an assembly of Eastern Vartabieds, who wrote to the Pontiff recommending him to desist.

FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

I

The Synod held in Sis. — Constantine restored. — Attempts to reform the Ritual. — Origin of the patriarchate of Jerusalem. — Constantine the Third.

In the beginning of this century the Armenians enjoyed perfect peace under the government of Leo the Fourth. Gregory the Pontiff, always planning the amelioration of his charge, thought it fitting time to take some measures for the better regulation of ecclesiastical customs and ceremonies. For this purpose he wrote, A. D. 1305, to John Orbel Archbishop of the Sewnies and temporal prince of that country, who possessed much influence with the inhabitants of Armenia Major, making known his views. He made also a similar communication to Zachariah Zorzorensis, Archbishop of Ardaz and abbot of the monastery of the Apostle Thaddeus; also to the Vartabied John of Ezenga, surnamed Zorzorensis from his belonging to the con-



vent of Zorzor, and to several other eminent persons.

Disputes arose however, and principally between John Orbel and Zachariah Zorzorensis; whereupon the Pontiff, fearing opposition to his projects and knowing that much deference was paid by the nation to Hethum, surnamed Father of the king, he wrote to him requesting that an assembly of the clergy should be summoned to decide on certain points he would lay before it. In the mean time the Pontiff compiled a creed and gave a copy to king Leo; but before he had time to carry his intentions into execution he was suddenly taken ill and died, A. D. 1306.

The assembly, however, was notwithstanding held in Sis by order of king Leo. Forty one bishops, seven abbots, ten eminent Vartabieds, with a great number of the clergy, were present, as were also king Leo with Hethum, and a considerable number of the chiefs. Here the creed drawn up by Gregory the late Pontiff was read, and nine canons enacted thereupon, one of which related to the acknowledgement of two distinct natures in Christ, the remainder to the church ritual. At the same assembly bishop Constantine, a native of Cesarea, who had formerly sat in the pontifical chair, was elected Pontiff.

As soon as Constantine took possession of his office, he endeavoured to put into execution the enactments passed by the late assembly; he found it however, impossible, the people resolutely opposing them, and murder and strife were the only results; matters were then left in abeyance till nine years after another synod was held in the city of Adana, where the same canons were again approved and confirmed. The nation however again acted precisely as before, determined to retain the venerated customs of their forefathers.

So potent was the spirit of fanaticism and so violent were the dissensions created by well meant and even necessary attempts of reform, that they culminated, A. D. 1308, in the murder of the good king Leo, of the venerated Hethum his uncle and of many of the principal chiefs.

In the same year king Oshin succeeded to the crown. He insisted upon the canons of the synod of Sis being observed, and discord and dissension again overspread the land. Sarkis bishop of Jerusalem, entirely rejected the synod in question and disregarded the orders of Oshin and of the Pontiff Constantine. Then having gained over some of the bishops and Vartabieds, he procured a diploma from the sultan of Egypt authorizing him to exert indepen-

dent spiritual authority within his diocese; upon which he assumed the title of Patriarch of Jerusalem, A. D. 1311. From this prelate sprung the patriarchate of the Armenians in Jerusalem.

During this period the neighbouring infidel princes began to invade Cylicia, destroying every thing by sword and fire<sup>1</sup>. Their intention was to exterminate the Armenians. Leo the king and Constantine the Pontiff wrote to Pope John imploring aid. The Pope could only exhort them to patience and send them money to enable them to repair their towns and villages, and to raise troops to oppose the invaders. Constantine the Pontiff sunk under the contemplation of the distress of his country and died in the sixteenth year of his pontificate.

Constantine the Third, from Lampron, succeeded him in the pontifical dignity, A. D. 1323, and took up his residence in Sis. This Pontiff succeeded in persuading the Sultan of Egypt to sign a treaty of peace with the Armenian king, to the great joy of all the Armenians. Having given peace to Cylicia, he shortly after died, having held the pontificate only four years.

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Armen., p. 344.

## II

**Jacob the Second.** — Origin of the Unionists. — Mekhithar the Pontiff. — Two impostor bishops. — The 117 heresies of the Armenians. — A deputy sent by the Armenians to Pope Benedict. — Jacob Sisensis restored. — His successor. — The question of adding water to the wine. — Other Pontiffs and miserable condition of Armenia.

Jacob the Second, from Sis, then became Pontiff, in the year 1327. During his pontificate, an Armenian Vartabied named John, — who had gone to Aderbadagan and had become a disciple of a Latin bishop named Bartholomew, — having learned the latin language came back to Armenia. There he began to make disciples with whom he undertook to change the religious customs and church ceremonies of the Armenians. This was the cause of many dissensions among the Armenians, until the bishops together with the king, were obliged to drive away the instigators of the troubles. But by this measure it was impossible to pacify the factions; so that at length dissension also broke out between the king and the Pontiff, whereupon the former caused the latter to be destituted, after a pontificate of fourteen years.

Mekhithar from the village of Kurna in the province of Erentchag, succeeded him, A. D. 1341. The change of the Pontiff, however, did nothing but increase the virulence of the factions. For the Vartabied John, whom we have beforementioned, had already formed a fraternity on the model of the Latin order of Dominicans, under the appellation of Unionists, their object being to unite the Armenian Church to the Latin, by altering the national rites. Having increased in number, they spread confusion every where, as they did not allow to be orthodox the forms of baptism, confirmation, and receiving holy orders as practised by the Armenians, and all their proselytes were obliged to be re-baptized and confirmed by them according to the Latin rites. Priests on embracing their tenets were also obliged to renew their ecclesiastical vows before they could recommence their duties. They sought to substitute for the whole of the ceremonies of the Armenian Church those in use with the Latins, and in consequence contention arose throughout the kingdom and continued for a considerable time. Owing to the determined resistance they encountered from the mass of the people, these innovators speedily began to decrease and finally became extinct.

Some time previous to the elevation of

Mekhithar to the pontificate, Nierses Ba-  
lientz, entitled bishop of Ormi, and Simeon  
Beg called bishop of Garin, having joined  
the Unionists began with more than ordi-  
nary zeal to spread their doctrines, and  
much mischief was done by them in the  
Church. The irritated Armenians at length  
expelled them from the country. Simeon  
took refuge in Cyprus and Nierses fled else-  
where.

When the latter heard of Mekhithar's  
accession to the pontifical chair, he came to  
him, hoping to be able to make a proselyte  
of him. But Mekhithar on examining the  
deeds and the doctrines of Nierses, excom-  
municated him as subverter of wholesome  
institutions and laws. Irritated at this  
Nierses forthwith proceeded to Avignon  
where Pope Benedict then resided, and ac-  
cused the Armenians as abounding in here-  
sies, a scurrility similar to that which had  
already been committed to writing by Si-  
meon Beg. There were at this time in Av-  
ignon several of the followers of the Union-  
ists, who together with certain ignorant  
Latin vartabieds who boasted of being per-  
fectly acquainted with the rites of the eastern  
churches, headed by Nierses invented a  
number of falsehoods, and compiling them  
in a small book, presented it to the Pope,  
as containing 117 heresies in vogue among

the Armenians. This book was forwarded by the Pope with a letter to the Pontiff Mekhithar and king Leo.

Thereupon, A. D. 1342, a large assembly of bishops and priests was convened in the city of Sis, where all the accusations contained in the book were investigated and confuted as being most unfounded calumnies. The report of the proceedings of the assembly was then forwarded to the Pope, who rejoiced thereat and was convinced that the charges brought against the Armenians were mere calumnies.

After some correspondence between the Armenian king and the Pope on religious affairs, the ex-pontiff Jacob Sisensis was sent on a mission to his Holiness. On his arrival at Avignon he was presented to the Pope and succeeded in unmasking the true nature of the charges which their calumniators had laid against the Armenians, thus putting them to confusion and shame. On the envoy's return to Cylicia the Pontiff Mekhithar died, A. D. 1355, after having held that office fourteen years.

Jacob Sisensis was then again appointed to the pontificate, but he enjoyed this dignity only four years, at the expiration of which he died.

Then Mesrob from the province of Ardaz, Abbot of the convent of St. Thaddeus, was

elected to the pontificate, A. D. 1359. During his days much contention arose amongst the Armenians on account of some of the clergy adding water to the wine of the Holy Eucharist, while the national custom was to use wine only. Being unable to calm the excitement, Mesrob held an assembly in the royal city of Sis, composed of bishops and priests, where after many disputes, seeing that it was impossible to unite the parties, he ordered all the clergy thenceforward to conform themselves to the old custom, consecrating the Sacrament with pure wine. Thus the custom of adding water, which was admitted by some of the clergy after the councils of Sis and Adana, A. D. 1307, was abolished among the Armenians. He died in the year 1372, after holding the pontifical dignity thirteen years.

Constantine the Fourth succeeded him for two years, when he died and was succeeded by

Paul the First, A. D. 1374. During the days of all these Pontiffs, Cylicia was in a dreadful condition; the Egyptians made continually incursions with the purpose of destroying not only the Armenian power but even christianity itself in that country. At length they succeeded in their intention, and by the captivity of king Leo the last,



royalty among the Armenians became extinct<sup>1</sup>.

Paul the Pontiff, having witnessed this sad event, died, A. D. 1378, after a pontificate of four years.

Theodore the Second succeeded him. He fixed his chair in the ruined city of Sis; yet seldom went there except for the purpose of ordaining priests and blessing the chrism. Neither he nor his successor had any certain place of residence, being obliged by the distracted condition of the country to wander from place to place to obtain sustenance and security.

During the pontificate of Theodore, Tamerlane the Tyrant, invaded Armenia, and spread destruction and desolation every where. Many of the Christians were tortured in order to make them deny their religion; whereupon great numbers were martyred. Theodore also the Pontiff was seized by one Melick Omar, a chief of the Kurds, who put him to death in the eighteenth year of his pontificate, A. D. 1395.

Garabied the First succeeded Theodore as Pontiff, and died two years after.

David the Fourth was then elected pontiff, and died after a pontificate of four years.

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Arm., p. 358.

During the time of all these last pontiffs, Armenia being continually ravaged by the invasion of the infidels and consequently in the most deplorable civil state, no religious event happened worthy to be mentioned, except persecutions by the infidels and other vexations.

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

I

Troubles caused by the Unionists. — Gregory Datevensis. — Intrigues for the pontifical dignity. — Succession of Pontiffs. — Armenian Vartabeds in the Council of Florence. — The pontifical see removed to Etchmiadzin.

With the destruction of the civil authority in Armenia, the ecclesiastical organisation naturally suffered. We find that many successive Pontiffs died shortly after their accession either by ill treatment received from the infidels, or in consequence of the life of anxiety and care which the national troubles caused them.

David the Fourth, who died in the second year of this century, was succeeded by Garabied the Second, during whose time many of the unhappy people were martyred in Armenia. About that epoch a violent strife also arose between the Armenian clergy and the sect of the Unionists, already mentioned. One Sarkis, an Armenian Vartabed, endeavoured to make peace between

the two parties; but finding his efforts unavailing he retired to the convent of Sukhara in the province of Katchperunies. Another Vartabied, John of Orodén, at first defended the Unionists, but having found that the latter had re-baptized and reordained some of his own disciples, and also of those of Sarkis, he renounced all further connection with them, as did also several other Vartabieds and some of the chiefs and people. The violent procedure of the Unionists caused many of their followers to abandon them, and it at length excited active opposition from the nobles, who caused them much annoyance and persecution. Among those whom their pretensions and arrogance disgusted into secession was Gregorius Dathevensis, a disciple of John of Orodén, who at first their champion, soon greatly distinguished himself against them both by preaching and writing. Blinded by pride and fanaticism and incapable of moderation they were at length regarded as a public nuisance and were every where given into the hands of the infidel governors.

Garabied the Second died after a pontificate of seven years, A. D. 1400.

Jacob the Third a Vartabied, through the influence of the infidel chief of Cylicia, then ascended the pontifical chair, which he

occupied for two years, when he was poisoned by some of the inhabitants of Sis on account of which dreadful tumults broke out in that city.

A Vartabied named Gregory, seeing the inhabitants embarrassed as to the selection of a new Pontiff, succeeded in gaining a few partisans by whom he was elevated to the pontifical dignity. A conspiracy was soon formed against him, which was, however, discovered and frustrated and the conspirators were punished by the chiefs of Cylicia. Gregory meanwhile could not please the citizens of Sis, and after tolerating his pontificate for seven years they all rose in a body, seized and confined him in a fortress, where he shortly after died.

Paul the Second, from Ararat, bishop of Jerusalem, having come to Sis for the purpose of restoring harmony, succeeded Gregory and in a great measure tranquillized the people. He diligently undertook to re-organise the Church, but so much did he suffer from the desperate condition of the country, that he lived but a short life and died, after holding the pontifical office twelve years. He was succeeded, A. D. 1430, by Constantine the Fifth, from the city of Vahga. During his days the Council of Florence was held and his attendance was

invited by Pope Eugene the Fourth. But seeing the impossibility of leaving his post vacant, he deputed to the Council four Vartabieds, who accepted and subscribed to the unity between the Armenian and Latin Churches.

Constantine died after a pontificate of nine years, and with his decease may be dated the decline of the purity and splendour of the pontifical chair of Sis.

Joseph the Third, a Vartabied, succeeded him and died about a year afterwards. But as he was a man of the worst moral character, he is not reputed a legitimate Pontiff, although he is counted among them.

Gregory the Ninth, surnamed Musapég, then became Pontiff, A. D. 1440, and on the day of his election consecrated four bishops without the customary ceremony, there being at that time too few prelates in Sis to admit of its being performed. On this irregularity becoming known, four bishops of Cylicia wrote a complaint against the Pontiff to all the Armenian clergy, at the same time making widely known the miserable state to which the pontifical chair of Sis was reduced. Upon this a correspondence took place among the clergy, resulting in the determination to elect either a new Pontiff, or to re-elect the same Gregory,

and to remove the seat of the spiritual government of the Armenians to Etchmiadzin; especially as it was said that the hand of the Blessed Illuminator had recently been brought to that place. They then respectfully requested to Gregory to remove his chair to Etchmiadzin; on his refusal an assembly of the clergy was held in the church of Etchmiadzin, comprising more than 700 bishops, vartabieds, abbots, hermits, and priests, among whom was bishop Azaria, Pontiff of the Aghuans. Zachariah, bishop of Havutz-Thar was appointed to preside. As the disturbed state of the country prevented the attendance of many of the Armenian clergy, they wrote to say they would acknowledge the Pontiff who might be chosen by the assembly. The clergy of the pontificate of Aghthamar also wrote to the same effect, and moreover promised to unite with the rest in due obedience to the future Pontiff of Etchmiadzin.

The assembly having proceeded to the election, the Vartabied Guiragos, from the village of Kharapast in the province of Katchperunies, was by unanimous consent, elected Pontiff.

## II

Guiragos Virabensis. — Troubles. — Guiragos is deposed. — The Pontiff of Sis continue to succeed. — Origin of the patriarchate of Constantinople. — Appointment of Vicars to the pontificate. — Troubles.

Guiragos, on account of his having resided thirty two years in the convent of Khor-Virab was surnamed Virabensis. He was an humble character, prudent in counsel, sober in words, rigid in the practice of self-mortification, and deeply read in the Holy Scriptures. He was elected to the pontifical chair of Etchmiadzin, A. D. 1441, with authority over the whole of the Armenian Church. All this was done with the permission and under the protection of Yaghup, chief of Erevan.

Guiragos, on assuming his office, wrote a letter of benediction in which he annulled all excommunications previously pronounced by the Pontiffs of Sis, particularly that against the seat of Aghthamar, and substituted benedictions for anathema. He then began to repair the pontifical palace, restoring all the ornaments as they formerly existed. He built several convents



and churches, and repaired the cathedral of Etchmiadzin, as well as the churches of Ripsima and Kayané.

Two years after these events, a bishop named Mark, from Georgia, formed a faction against Guiragos, arraigning the legality of his election. « This pontificate, said Mark, is null, for its possessor was a partisan of the see of Aghthamar, which long lay under anathema. Besides, Guiragos ought first to have received episcopal consecration from a Pontiff, before he was elevated to the pontificate. » The enemies of Guiragos increased in number and in activity until at length about thirty of the clergy, consisting of bishops and vartabieds, set out for Etchmiadzin, with Zachariah bishop of Havutz-Thar at their head, to depose the Pontiff from his chair.

Guiragos having heard of their approach was struck with dread and retired secretly into a friend's house. But his enemies soon found him, seized and carried him to Yaghup, Bey of Erevan, before whom they accused him with a ludicrous result : « We have discovered, said they, that he is not a christian, nor has he ever been baptized. If you wish that he should remain our Pontiff, it is necessary that he be baptized and elected anew. » The chief replied, addressing himself to Zachariah : « Did not

you yourself elect him Pontiff of your nation? What is the matter now, that after once ordaining him you wish to ordain him again? » — Zachariah then said : « Far be it from me. It was not I that ordained him, but his party. »

At this moment a Vartabied named Garabied, and a young boy who accompanied Guiragos, exclaimed with a loud voice : « They speak falsely and unjustly. » Upon this one of the Vartabieds of the opposite party gave the boy a violent blow on the mouth. The chief incensed at this, drove, both accused and accusers, from his presence.

Zachariah the bishop then sending all the clergy back to Etchmiadzin returned to the chief, and by promises and entreaties obtained his permission to elect another Pontiff in the room of Guiragos. He then hastened to Etchmiadzin, where having produced an order from the Bey, they forthwith elected Gregory, bishop of Magu, Pontiff, and then retired to their respective domiciles.

The Pontiff Guiragos after having remained some time in concealment, retired to a convent where he died. His pontificate is reckoned to have lasted two years. A consequence of this last discord was, that the Vartabieds of Aghthamar, who had hi-

therto obeyed the Pontiff of Etchmiadzin, renounced all subjection to him.

It was expected that when Guiragos was elected Pontiff the pontificate of Sis would be quickly incorporated with that of Etchmiadzin; but the late disorders dissipated all hope of any such union. On the death of the Pontiff of Sis, a Vartabied named Garabied, presented himself as a candidate to the chief of Cylicia, and promising to pay annually the sum of 300 deniers, was by his order placed in the pontifical chair of that city. Other individuals continue to succeed him in that dignity to this day. The 300 deniers have been always paid constituting, as the records state, that tribute which is called « Keshish Aghtchecy, » or Priest-Money.

Gregory the Tenth on assuming his authority, A. D. 1443, proceeded with the repairs and improvements commenced by his predecessor. In the eleventh year of his pontificate Sultan Mahomet took Constantinople from the Greeks. A few years after, the Sultan brought several Armenian families from different parts of their country, and established them in and around Constantinople. The Sultan then gave bishop Joachim, who was brought from Brussah, letters patent, authorizing him to assume the spiritual jurisdiction of all the Arme-

nians situated in Greece and Asia Minor and styling him « Patrik » or Patriarch. The authority thus created was not only spiritual but civil also. The Patriarch was to be regarded by the Armenians of Constantinople and all the provinces around, as the Sultan's civil Lieutenant in all that regarded social tranquillity, obedience to the laws and submission to the Sovereign. He had ample authority over all the national bishops and prelates within his jurisdiction having power to destitute, change or confirm them, as he might judge necessary. Wherefore the Sultan by a special decree ordered the Armenians to regard and respect him as his own representative in all their affairs, without any exception or distinction. He, however, did not forbid them to regard the Pontiff of Etchmiadzin as the supreme spiritual head of the full body of the nation. Such was the origin of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which continues to this day.

While things were in this state at Constantinople, the reigning Pontiff Gregory being extremely molested by the infidel chiefs on account of tributes which they demanded from Etchmiadzin, and being unequal to the duties of the pontificate, appointed a Vartabied named Aristagues as his colleague of the holy chair and bishop

of Etchmiadzin, giving into his charge the temporal affairs of his church and ordaining him his successor.

The appointment of Vicars grew into a custom and was the cause of a confusion of names and dates of events, as till this time the Pontiff only was known by the appellation of Vicar. The vicars were afterwards, on their appointment, allowed pontifical honours; like the Pontiff they signed briefs and issued orders, nor did they unfrequently seek the patronage of the infidels, rise against the Pontiffs, and even expel them from their chairs which they would usurp themselves, as will hereafter appear.

In the eighteenth year of the pontificate of the Pontiff Gregory, his vicar Arisdagues caballed against him and attempted to usurp the pontifical chair. In the mean time a certain Vartabied named Sarkis, attached to the church of Etchmiadzin, having purloined the hand of the Blessed Illuminator, carried it to Tabriez, in the hope of inducing the infidel chief Jihanshah to create him the Pontiff of Armenia.

Zachariah the Pontiff of Aghthamar informed of these facts of Arisdagues, hastened to Tabriez with valuable presents and presenting them to Jihanshah demanded the government of Etchmiadzin and the general pontificate of Armenia. Precisely at

the same moment Sarkis entered the same presence and made the same request. Jihanshah pleased with the manners of Zachariah ordered that he should be Pontiff first, but that Sarkis, in the event of surviving, should succeed him. He then took the holy hand from the latter and giving it to Zachariah, sent him with great honour to Etchmiadzin to take possession of the pontificate, placing him under the particular protection of his son Hassan Ali, then governor in Nakhjuan.

Zachariah proceeding to Etchmiadzin, expelled Gregory and Arisdagues and took possession of the pontifical authority, exercising at the same time control over the see of Aghthamar. A few days after he appointed Sarkis his vicar, A. D. 1461.

A year after these events Gregory and Arisdagues being reconciled, collected a considerable sum of money and accompanied by a few nobles, went to Nakhjuan, where they preferred an accusation against Zachariah to Hassan Ali. They offered also to pay this chief without delay the annual tribute of the pontificate if he would restore them to their former authority. Hassan Ali consented and in order to succeed sent to Zachariah demanding a very considerable sum of money. Zachariah being in the impossibility of furnishing it, sought to

obtain time by means of frivolous excuses, and then seizing upon the hand of the Blessed Illuminator and all the valuable ornaments of the church of Etchmiadzin, fled to his see of Aghthamar. Here he deposited the holy hand, A. D. 1462, in the church of the holy Cross. His pontificate is reckoned to have lasted one year.

Gregory and Arisdagues then re-took possession of the pontificate. The former dying in a short time, the latter succeeded him under the title of Arisdagues the Second. He died after a pontificate of four years.

He was succeeded by Sarkis the Second, who had been vicar under Zachariah. This Pontiff appointed the Vartabied John as his Vicar, consecrating him at the same time bishop of Etchmiadzin. Sarkis who had been the first to remove the holy hand of the Illuminator from Etchmiadzin, now sought to get it back. By the assistance of bishop Vertanes he again got possession of it and restored it in its former place, A. D. 1477. After remaining in the pontificate twenty four years he died.

Arisdagues the Third succeeded Sarkis in the pontifical chair, A. D. 1490, and held it eight years when he died.

His successor was his vicar Thaddeus the First, who died after a pontificate of five years.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

I

**Succession of Pontiffs.** — Stephen the Fifth and Michael his Vicar. — He undertakes a pilgrimage to Rome. — Michael of Sebastia. — Abgar is sent a deputy to Rome. — The intention of Pope Gregory. — Other Pontiffs and the miseries they suffered from their oppressors. — Melchizedech the Pontiff in Constantinople.

The successor of Thaddeus the First was Eghishé, A. D. 1503; he held that office twelve years.

Zachariah the Third succeeded him and died five years after.

Then Sarkis the Third was elevated to the pontificate and enjoyed that dignity till his death, sixteen years.

Gregory the Eleventh was then appointed Pontiff in the year 1536, and died five years after.

Stephen the Fifth from the city of Salmast, in the province of Gorjaik next ascended the pontifical chair, A. D. 1541. From the fact of his elevation having taken



place in the city of Constantinople he came to be distinguished by the appellation «Constantinopolitan.» During his days, a war that broke out between the Turks and Persians, was the cause of much devastation in Armenia. The people suffered greatly and many, on account of their faith, were martyred by the infidels. Stephen the Pontiff being exceedingly annoyed by this war, appointed Michael of Sebastia, a wise and faithful man, to be his Vicar; to him he confided the duties of the pontificate, and then proceeded to Constantinople. On his arrival he was received with much honour by Asdvadzadur, the Patriarch of the Armenians in that city.

Shortly after Stephen went to Rome on a pilgrimage to the shrines of St. Peter and St. Paul. Here he was greatly honoured by the Pope, for whom the Armenian Pontiff had a particular regard. He then visited the Emperor Charles the Fifth in Germany, and passing through Poland and Russia returned to Armenia. On his proceeding to Etchmiadzin, he was honourably received by his Vicar Michael, and resumed the duties of the pontificate. Stephen shortly after died, having held the pontificate fifteen years.

Michael of Sebastia, his former Vicar, then succeeded him, A. D. 1556, and on his election consecrated the Vartabied Parsegh

bishop and Vicar of Etchmiadzin. The country, at this time, suffering much from marauders, Michael was induced to remove for a short time to Sebastia. Thence he despatched Abgar, a wise and ingenious man, to Rome, together with a priest named Alexander, and furnished them with a letter, expressing friendship and veneration, to the Pope, for the purpose of settling some religious points. He also sent His Holiness at the same time a copy of the treaty of union made in the days of the Illuminator, also a general list of convents, churches, relics of Saints and the places where they are kept in Armenia. Michael the year after returned to Etchmiadzin.

Abgar met with a very kind reception from the Pope, A. D. 1564, and on their proceeding to hold a conference respecting the object of the mission, the Pope was so pleased with the ingenuity and knowledge displayed by the Armenian, that he requested him to write a simple and brief account of the religious creed and traditions of his country.

Abgar did so, aided by the priest Alexander. In this memorial nothing was inserted that did not exist in fact; and it is a very interesting document, as in it are briefly resumed the doctrines and the customs of the Armenian Church.

*Abgar's brief exposition of the creed and ceremonies of the Armenian Church.*

« We Armenians, living in servitude under the dominion of the Turks and Persians, believe and maintain as follows :

We believe that the Father is not begotten, the Son is begotten, and the Holy Ghost is proceeding; three sovereign Persons and one Divinity.

We believe that Mary, the mother of God, was virgin before as well as after the nativity.

We believe that our Saviour performed all the deeds of his admirable Incarnation, through the human nature which he assumed with us.

We believe in the Annunciation of Mary, in the Nativity of Christ, in his Presentation at the temple, in his Baptism, Transfiguration and Crucifixion, in his three days' interment and in his Resurrection and Ascension.

We believe that he sits on the right of the Father, and that he will come again.

We believe that through his perfect nativity, he assumed perfectly the human nature with the exception of sin.

Such is truly the belief we all confess.

We possess the seventy two books of the Old and New Testament; all the books of the prophecies, a hundred and fifty Psalms, four Gospels, the two epistles of Peter, those of John, James and Jude, and the fourteen epistles of Paul.

We have also the seven Sacraments of the Church; we acknowledge that the mortal sins are seven.

We acknowledge Moses as the principal among the Prophets; and that there are twelve Apostles and seventy two disciples, among whom supreme is Peter.

We believe that he who confesses his sins to a priest is absolved.

We accept no other oecumenical Synods than these three; viz. the Nicean and those of Constantinople and Ephesus.

We recite daily the Nicean creed.

We perform the Sacrament of the Eucharist as taught by St. Gregory.

In the Sacrament of the chalice we do not make use of leaven nor of water.

Neither do we celebrate the holy mass twice a day upon the same altar.

If any christian of another nationality or religion, becomes a convert to our religion, we do not re-baptize him.

Those among us who are subject to monastic life, live in chastity and celibacy,

and are never married; but our lay clergy first marry and afterwards receive holy orders.

Our monks notwithstanding have no authority to baptize, neither to perform the ceremony of marriage when a priest is present.

We fast a hundred and fifty five days a year, at which time we eat neither fish, nor any milk-food; there are also other five days in the year, when we eat only eggs and milk-food.

We never celebrate feasts of Saints on Sundays, but separately.

For the feast of the Epiphany we agree with the Roman Church; but for that of Christmas day we disagree.

On holy saturday we eat only eggs and fish after sunset.

We administer the holy Sacrament in both kinds to all.

We solemnly perform the ceremony of first and second matrimony, but not the third.

We make alliance by marriage from the seventh degree; for relations with us do not intermarry until the fourth remove.

In praying, or in celebrating the mass we turn towards the East, and in kneeling we kiss the ground.

We have seven canonical divine services

which we perform in the church in two different times daily.

Such is our belief, confession, fasting and prayer; but at this epoch in which we suffer slavery and insupportable vexations, our ceremonies are fallen in decay; for if we dare preach publicly in the presence of the infidels, they throw us into the fire; but if it pleases God that we should free ourselves from this slavery, we will willingly submit to whatever commands you may impose upon us; for at the present time we possess neither force, nor any power, or authority; so that if we would correct any of our transgressors and oblige him to amend himself, he disobeying, becomes an apostate. For that purpose we humbly beseech thy Holiness and thy paternal benignity, to look kindly upon us. For thou indeed art the great Pontiff of the four parts of the world; whomsoever thou shalt loose, he shall be loosed, and whomsoever thou shalt bind, he shall be bound. Do not look, we pray, at our imperfection and faults, since we are in slavery; but pardon us and account us in the number of the flock which has been bestowed on you; renew us who are grown old, and revive in us the fervour of love and devotion to the holy Roman Church; for we are the destitute servants of thy Holiness.

We celebrate the Sacrament of the holy Eucharist for the deceased, and offer prayers unto God, and give alms to the poor; we also endow the churches for the benefit of our souls.

Three times a year we particularly commemorate the deceased in the church, by offering new-born animals (lambs or calves), by distributing alms, and by dispensing food to ecclesiastics, to the people and to the poor.

We honour the relics of all saints, and placing some fragments in crucifixes or in special boxes of great value, we place them with honour upon the altars.

We greatly honour those crucifixes which have been blessed and anointed with the holy oil, and erect them on the holy altar; in the same way we honour the pictures which have been blessed and place them over the altars.

Twice a year our priests and the ministers of the church carry round to the houses a crucifix and a picture in order that the infirm and the sick, who in consequence of old age and infirmity are unable to go to church, may offer them due honour and kiss them; and through these crucifixes and pictures miracles are very often wrought among us.

As for the guilty or excommunicated,

such is our rule : If any priest , bishop , archbishop or Pontiff has bound or excommunicated any transgressor and happen to die before he has absolved him, none among the successors of him who may have bound or excommunicated, shall be able to annul the effect except the supreme Pontiff of Rome ; to whom, according to our rules, we address the repentent with the brief of his excommunication, in order that he might be loosened and the letter be destroyed. For it belongs only to you to absolve him, and by tearing to pieces the letter of his bonds, you return him to our Church.

According to the doctrine of our pontiff St. Gregory, we all believe whatever the holy catholic and apostolic Church believes ; and likewise all that she rejects and anathematizes, we also do anathematize.

We admit that the soul of an impenitent christian who may have died without confession and repentance, is delivered up to the devil ; but he who by confession and repentance has been cleansed , his soul ascends to heaven. He, however, who died confessed and communicated, but has not done penance, his parents , relations and friends , can free his soul through alms, masses, prayers, and other works of piety.

We account St. Gregory as our first Patriarch ; he having repaired to Rome, was



consecrated and blessed by St. Sylvester during the time of the Emperor Constantine and of our king Tiridates.

We confess also that Christ said to St. Peter the Apostle, « Feed my sheep » ; and that he also prayed for him that his faith fail not. Now if there be any among us who does not confess that the chair of Peter is the supreme , and that the Pontiff of Rome is the chief and the father of all the world and the heir of the keys, such an one is an apostate from the Gospels and from Jerusalem and from the chair of the Illuminator of Etchmiadzin.

Now, holy father, may this that I have dared briefly to resume in this writing, regarding the confession of faith of the Armenians as well as the citation of the seventy two books, in order to present it to your omniscient wisdom, suffice, for it is not becoming to place a candle's light before the sun.

This confession of faith of the Armenians, has been written briefly by Abgar and Alexander, an Armenian priest, and translated (into Latin ) by Baptist the Ethiopian, in the great city of Rome, in the time of our lord Pope Pius the Fourth, and in the year of our Lord 1564, 8<sup>th</sup> november, wednesday. »

The latin translation of this work was presented by Abgar to the Pope. We, however, do not know what answer was vouchsafed, but of this we are certain, that from that period the Pontiff of Rome showed a more than ordinary interest in the welfare of the Armenian nation. On the elevation of Gregory the Thirteenth, to the papal chair, he read the production of Abgar, and thereby learning what tyranny prevailed in Armenia, wished to render some assistance. Being unable to effect this by coercing their enemies, he proposed to erect, at the expense of the Romish Church, an university in Armenia. He therefore published a Bull to effect the execution of his project, in which he bestowed great praises on the Armenians.

The excellent intentions of pope Gregory were, however, never fulfilled, for he died six months after issuing the brief for the commencement of the work. His successor, Sixtus the Fifth, erected in lieu of the university, an inn for the Armenians, dedicating it to St. Mary the Egyptian <sup>1</sup>.

On the return of Abgar to Armenia the Pontiff Michael died, after presiding over

<sup>1</sup> About forty years after in the days of Pope Urban the Eighth, one Paul, a native of Bolonia, who was consecrated bishop of Nakhjuan, having visited India and America, collected a large sum of money for the erection of a seminary in Armenia. He died in Spain, bequeathing the whole of his

the Church twenty two years, A. D. 1567. His Vicar Der Parsegh having died about a year previously,

Gregory the Twelfth succeeded and died after a pontificate of four years.

He was succeeded by Stephen the Sixth, who only enjoyed his dignity two years when he died.

Thaddeus the Second then became pontiff and appointed the Vartabed Arakiel his Vicar.

In the days of these Pontiffs Shah Tahmas the First, king or Sophi of Persia, terribly harassed the Armenians, invading, plundering and destroying their country with remorseless cruelty. The Pontiff Thaddeus the Second died after a pontificate of nine years.

He was succeeded, A. D. 1584, by his Vicar, Arakiel, a prudent and worthy character. The Turks having conquered the whole of Armenia as far as Ts'oriz, increased their exactions to such an intolerable degree, that all ranks of people were reduced to the greatest poverty. The pontificate of Etchmiadzin was also taxed to an enormous amount, which so much dis-

property for the establishment of an Armenian seminary at Rome. This intention however was never carried out; but instead some Armenian youths were admitted into the Propaganda College at Rome, where after due instruction they were ordained priests and sent to their country as missionaries.

tressed Arakiel, that, after holding his dignity two years he relinquished it and consecrating the Vartabied David his successor, retired to a convent where he remained until his death.

David the Fifth, from the borders of Etchmiadzin, succeeding to Arakiel, was much molested by the Turks and compelled to pay immense treasures. He complied with their demands as long as he could, collecting from his impoverished countrymen for more than they could spare. These resources at length failing him, he was obliged to leave Etchmiadzin and roam for some time a fugitive in search of sustenance and safety. But at length perceiving that by his absence the tributes were annually increasing, he determined to take a colleague in the pontificate. For this purpose, in the seventh year of his pontificate, he returned to Etchmiadzin, and collecting a few bishops, consecrated bishop Melchizedek Pontiff, A. D. 1593.

Melchizedek, from the convent of Aghi, in Garny, now a co-pontiff with David, soon became oppressed by the load of tributes. He could scarcely collect sufficient money to supply himself with necessaries, and was therefore placed in the impossibility of paying the enormous taxes le-

vied on him. The governors, however, persisted in their demands, and the two colleagues were obliged to borrow money at high interest to satisfy them, until at last the debts of the church of Etchmiadzin amounted to 50,000 deniers. Hereupon the creditors demanded payment, and at the same time the governors persisted in further extortions; this obliged the two Pontiffs to take to flight and conceal themselves. They were however so harassed that they were unable to remain in one spot more than two or three days, as their creditors and the collectors were continually hunting them.

Melchizedek at length finding that nothing was gained by concealment, set out for Constantinople, hoping to collect money there. He was kindly received by the people of the city, who keeping him for some months, urged him to vacate his chair, promising to appoint him Patriarch of the Armenians. This actually occurred, for on the abdication of their patriarch Diradur, Melchizedek succeeded him in that place; he did not, however, long enjoy that dignity, as at the expiration of a year he was deposed and was succeeded by John the Third, who in his turn gave place to Gregory of Cesarea.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

I

Melchizedek returns to Etchmiadzin. — Serapion the bishop of Amid. — He is proclaimed Pontiff. — Shah Abas in Armenia and the debt of Etchmiadzin. — Sufferings and death of the Pontiff Serapion. — Bishop Sarkis. — The two Latin friars and the relics of St. Ripsima.

Melchizedek after being deposed from the patriarchate of Constantinople returned to Etchmiadzin, where he was betrayed into the hands of his creditors. He however succeeded in escaping and joined his colleague David in concealment. A dreadful famine that prevailed at the beginning of this century and an invasion of marauding hordes, increasing still more the miseries of the country, the debts also of the pontificate increased, and the two pontiffs began to loose all hopes of paying them.

At this period the rector of Amid, bishop Serapion, a pupil of Lucas of Keghi, became famous for the extent and variety

of his knowledge. He had inherited from his father property to an immense value. The two Pontiffs wrote to him, offering him the pontificate if he would clear off its incumbrances. Serapion grieved at the intelligence of the distress to which they were reduced, went to Julpha to meet them and to consult as to the means to be adopted for releasing them from their difficulties. On this occasion an assembly was held, at which Serapion slightly censured the measures which had been pursued by those who had occupied the pontifical chair. On hearing this, Manuel bishop of Havutz-Thar, one of the clergy who accompanied the Pontiffs, rose and in a violent speech set the whole assembly in a tumult, whereupon the assembly dispersed without coming to any determination. The two pontiffs retired to the convent of Datev, in the province of Sisagan.

Serapion remained at Julpha, where his preaching rendered him so popular that the inhabitants of that place carried him to Etchmiadzin, where an assembly of the clergy and laity being convened, he was elevated to the pontificate under the title of Gregory the Thirteenth. The intelligence of this event plunged Melchizedek and David into despair; for by decree of the assembly, which deposed them and elected

Serapion, they remained responsible for the debts which had been incurred by the Church of Etchmiadzin, notwithstanding that another usurped its government and disposed of its means. The two ex-pontiffs seeing no means to escape from their creditors, thought of applying for money to their countrymen residing in Ispahan. Melchizedek therefore, in company with two bishops, proceeded to that city where he was received with great honour by the people. A few days after he was presented to the king Shah Abas, who kindly listened to his sad story of his own misery and of the lamentable condition of Armenia.

Shah Abas being incited by the chief of Salamast, who had rebelled against the Turks, and some other chiefs, gathered a large army, and accompanied by Melchizedek, entered Armenia with the intention of wresting it from the Turks who were then in possession. The Turkish creditors, on hearing of the approach of the Persians, seized Serapion the Pontiff and insisted on his paying them. Serapion, seeing the danger in which he was involved, persuaded them to accept a partial payment, and then seizing his opportunity fled to Julpha.

Shah Abas advancing, conquered Upper Armenia and took possession of the city



of Erevan. He there caused the two ex-pontiffs, David and Melchizedek, to be brought into his presence, and thus addressed them: «It has been a practice with our kings, on conquering a country to deem theirs all that it contains. As I have conquered this country from the Turks, all therefore that belonged to them is mine, and all that is owed to them will enter my treasury. The immense amount of money which I am aware you have borrowed from the Turks, I now direct to be forthwith paid to me. Fear no future molestation from them, for I will give you an acquittance in full for all they may have lent to you.»

The two Pontiffs were struck with stupefaction on hearing this speech from the man to whom they had applied for assistance. Being in the impossibility of doing otherwise, they borrowed, at a most enormous interest, as much money as they owed their creditors, and brought it to the king; they were then left free.

Shah Abas next caused the Pontiff Serapion to be seized at Julpha and placed in confinement, demanding an immense sum as the price of his release. Although whatever Serapion possessed was extorted from him, yet the ministers of the king were not content, still demanding more from him.

Being unable to comply with their demands, he was put to the rack and daily carried out on the high road, where he was hung by the heels and cruelly bastinadoed. At length the wretched Pontiff procured bail to allow of his proceeding in search of money; after much trouble he procured by loans a sum sufficient to obtain his release. He then retired to Van and afterwards to Amid, his ancient see, where, ruined in health by the tortures he had suffered, he died after holding the pontificate three years.

Shah Abas having resolved to expatriate the Armenians and to carry them into Persia<sup>1</sup>, plundered Etchmiadzin and ordered the two Pontiffs David and Melchizedek to be seized, in company with many other bishops, and carried off with the captives. This resolution of the king caused the ruin of Armenia; cities, villages, churches, convents, all were destroyed, and for several years the country was left to the mercy of plunderers and banditti.

While Armenia was thus almost annihilated, Sarkis bishop of Saghmosavank, a man of extraordinary wisdom and piety, sought to ameliorate the condition of his countrymen. Having taken as his associate

<sup>1</sup> See Hist. of Arm., p. 375.

another virtuous man named Der Guiragos, he began to repair the different convents which had not been completely destroyed, and established excellent rules of conduct for the Vartabieds by whom they were inhabited. They also repaired a number of convents in Sewnies, where they obtained many scholars.

While these repairs were progressing, A. D. 1611, two Latin friars arrived in the district of Ararat, where meeting Melchizedek the Pontiff, they were furnished with an order to visit all the convents in Armenia. The two friars accordingly made a tour, in the course of which they discovered and took possession of various holy relics, particularly the head of the Apostle St. Andrew. Having gone to Etchmiadzin they took from the church of that place the relics of St. Ripsima, and endeavouring to make off with them, were taken by the ecclesiastics of that place, who recovered the precious body, but not entire, the Latin friars having succeeded in concealing three parts of it. One of these afterwards fell again into the hands of the Armenians and was brought to India and kept in the convent of Latin friars at Goa. The second was laid under the foundations of a church in the village of Vartaklukh, near Nakhjuan, dedicated to St. Ripsima.

The third was first kept at Julpha, but in the year 1755, it was brought to Bagdad, where it fell into the possession of an Armenian pearl-merchant, who carried it to Constantinople. The two Latin friars afterwards proceeded to the province of Kagharkunies, where they were killed by the Persians.

## II

Melchizedek accused to the Pontiff David. — He resigns the pontifical authority to Isaac his nephew. — Isaac flees to Van. — Moses the Third. — Isaac's attempt. — Death of Moses the Third. — Philip of Eringan. — His journey to Constantinople. — He returns to Etchmiadzin where he dies.

The Pontiff Melchizedek, who had withdrawn, escaped when the rest of his countrymen were marched to Persia, and was at this time residing concealed in Ereyan. This being observed by the clergy of Etchmiadzin, they were so much irritated against him that they accused him to the Pontiff David then living in new Julpha. They charged him with being the cause of the miserable state to which Etchmiadzin was reduced. The people of New

Julpha displeased at this news, entreated David to go to Etchmiadzin and there exercise his authority as Pontiff, promising to assist him with whatever he might require. But on his repairing to Etchmiadzin he was prevented by Melchizedek from taking possession of the pontificate. David then complained to Shah Abas who had just arrived from an expedition to the frontiers of Georgia, and who threatened Melchizedek with death. By the intromission, however, of Emirguen, a chief much beloved by Shah Abas, he was spared but was fined to an amount he was unable to pay.

In the year 1620, being in the greatest poverty and distress, he sent for the Vartabied Moses, who was then in great repute with the people, and consecrated him bishop, giving him power to bless the holy unction, and sending him to the church of Etchmiadzin to perform that ceremony in the hope that he might be able to make a good collection from the Armenian congregation assembled on that occasion. Hardly enough, however, was collected to support himself and his people. Whereupon he resigned the pontifical authority to Isaac his nephew, the latter assuming the burthen of the debts, he then fled to Constantinople. But the people of that city

would not hold any intercourse with him; wherefore he proceeded to the city of Leopoli in Poland, where a colony of about 1,000 Armenian families resided, and who received him with much honour. But in the year 1624, having, in opposition to the wish of the people, consecrated bishop one Nicolas Thorosovitz, a restless character, he was the cause of much trouble and persecution among the inhabitants for many years after.

Melchizedek next took up his residence in the city of Cameniz, and there he died, having held the pontificate, up to Isaac's consecration, thirty one years.

Isaac the Fourth, the new Pontiff, was so dreadfully harassed by the collectors of the tributes, that despairing of ever being able to raise the money they required, he sought safety by flight. This was rather difficult to execute as he was continually held in check by the collectors, travelling about the country to extort money. But arriving at Erevan, he persuaded his tormentors to permit him to go to Etchmiadzin and fetch thence all the gold and silver church ornaments, which he offered to deliver to them in payment of the tribute. This being conceded him, he availed himself of the opportunity to flee with all speed to Van, then under the government

of the Turks. This occurred in the fifth year of his pontificate.

Moses the Third, who was appointed in charge of the church of Etchmiadzin, was, by the general consent of the Armenians, elected Pontiff, A. D. 1629. Just about this time Shah Abas died and was succeeded by Shah Sefy. The Armenians applied to him for letters patent confirming Moses in his dignity. The Armenians residing in Persia also invited the Pontiff to come to Ispahan, where being presented to the king, he succeeded in obtaining a royal decree by which the see of Etchmiadzin was exonerated from future payment of tribute. Moses then returned to Etchmiadzin and began to repair the pontifical church.

News of the pontificate of Moses reaching Isaac at Van, he endeavoured to resume the pontifical authority among the Armenians residing there. He was unable, however, to execute his design on account of the opposition of many of the Armenians; and after an unfortunate attempt, for which he was nearly scourged to death by the Turkish governor, he repaired to Etchmiadzin, where he resigned his dignity and remained in humility and repentance until his death.

Moses thus remained in quiet possession of his office. He finished the repairs of the

church and enacted many useful regulations for the better government of the Vartabeds attached thereto; he renewed also the old customs and the stated hours for the performance of divine service. He established a large school in the convent of Johonavank, for the religious instruction of children. He wrote three times to Pope Urban the Eighth, which brought upon him the enmity of Gregory of Cesarea, the Patriarch of Constantinople, who, however, did not succeed in doing him any injury. Moses disregarded all wordly praise or censure, and firm in the path of rectitude, continued to govern his Church with advantage to its members and credit to himself. This worthy and fortunate Pontiff died in the year 1633, having presided over the Church three years and four months.

Philip, from the village of Eringan, in Aghpag Minor, a pupil of the late Pontiff, was then elevated to the pontificate. He was a pious and peaceful man, and devoted all his energies to the good government of his Church. He immediately began to repair and rebuild those parts of Etchmiadzin which had been destroyed during the hostilities between the Turks and Persians. In defraying the expenses of these undertakings, he was much aided by the Armenians of Ispahan.



Having put the government of his Church in good order, he thought to visit Constantinople in order to pacify the Armenian clergy and people of that city. For much trouble and many disputes reigned there on account of several aspirants to the patriarchal authority endeavouring to supplant each other by intrigues, and by promising the Turkish authorities large sums which they were afterwards unable to pay.

Philip therefore, attended by a large retinue of bishops and Vartabieds, set out in the year 1651, and on his arrival in Garin he was met by a messenger from the Armenian nobles in Constantinople, who had applied to the Turkish government to furnish him with a firman of safe conduct for his journey. From Garin Philip proceeded first to Jerusalem, where he remained four months. There he met Der Nierses the Pontiff of Sis, with whom he held several conferences, and at length an assembly took place, to which the clergy of the surrounding provinces were invited, Asdvadzadur the Patriarch of Jerusalem being also present. In this assembly thirteen canons were enacted, of which the first declared that henceforward all enmity between the Churches of Etchmiadzin and Sis should cease, and that the Pontiff of each, regarding the other with brotherly love, should

issue orders and ordain bishops in his own province only. The remainder of the canons laid down regulations for the better preservation of purity of morals amongst the Armenian clergy and laity.

From Jerusalem Philip continued his journey to Constantinople, where by his preaching and example he succeeded in establishing peace among the Armenian community. He also procured the election of John of Mughni to the patriarchate, and gathering money from the Armenians of the city, he paid the debts of the patriarchal church. Shortly after he returned to Etchmiadzin and there began the construction of a magnificent tower for the cathedral bells. He did not live, however, to finish this work; he died at the age of sixty three, having held the pontificate twenty two years. During his pontificate many Armenians were martyred on account of their faith. He also corresponded with Pope Innocent the Tenth.

### III

Jacob the Fourth. — The patriarchates of Constantinople and Jerusalem. — St. Jacob's convent. — Eleazar's attempts. — Jacob the Pontiff goes to Constantinople. — His death.

Immediately after the death of Philip, A. D. 1655, Jacob the Fourth from New Julpha, was elected Pontiff of the Armenians. He was a virtuous and prudent man and of extensive knowledge. He completed the buildings begun by his predecessor, and gave encouragement to the arts by patronizing two ingenious clergymen, one Mathew, a deacon of Zar, the other a Vartabied named Osgan, by whose means he caused several improvements in printing to be introduced. The art of printing however was caried afterwards to greater perfection by one Lucas of Vanant.

During the pontificate of Jacob new dissensions broke out in Constantinople on account of the patriarchal see, which after being but a short time in possession of John, was left vacant and occupied by some of the Armenian nobles with the title of guardians. But at length the Var-

tabied Thomas obtained letters patent appointing him to that dignity. The guardians seeing themselves thus supplanted, brought false accusations against him, and caused him to be imprisoned and poisoned.

About the year 1656, Eleazer of Anthab, once Patriarch of the Armenians at Constantinople, was appointed Vicar of the Patriarch at Jerusalem. On taking up his residence in the convent of St. Jacob, he began to examine the accounts and records of this convent, which at that time was very scanty, and he accidentally found a scrap of paper on which was a curious memorandum, alluding to a vast number of yellow and white candles in the stores of the place. Eleazar went to the magazine and to his infinite surprise discovered two large vessels of gold and silver deniers. About this time the Greeks being at enmity with the Armenians, had with the aid of the Vizir succeeded in getting possession of the convent of St. Jacob at Jerusalem, which belonged to the Armenians.

Eleazar, however, by means of the treasures he had discovered, gained several of the Turkish authorities, through whom he succeeded in obtaining a royal decree in force of which that convent was again restored to the Armenians. This happy event occurred in the year 1659.

Eleazar as Vicar being now in possession of the convent, sought the dignity of Patriarch of the Armenians in that city. Not content with this he also made use of the money he had found to obtain his nomination as Pontiff of all the Turkish Armenians. He was assisted in this ambitious project by Khatchadur, Pontiff of Sis, who publicly and with great pomp consecrated him Pontiff in the city of Aleppo. From that place Eleazar wrote letters of greeting and benediction to all the Armenians subject to the Turkish government, notifying the event of his elevation to the pontificate. He then proceeded to Jerusalem to take possession of his see; but he could not succeed in doing so. For Asdvadzadur the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had appointed him as his Vicar, hastened to prevent him and forced him to flee from the city. He was therefore driven to wander about in Egypt and Syria, seeking for the means of establishing himself in his dignity.

When the Pontiff Jacob heard of the ambitious doings of Eleazar, he despatched letters to all the Armenians residing under the Turkish government, exhorting them to desist from dissensions which would only tend to the destruction of the Church of their Blessed Illuminator. Then acceding

to the request of the Armenians, he undertook a journey to Constantinople in order to put an end to them.

Eleazar seeing the malignity of his enemies, had recourse to the Vizir at Adrianople, from whom he obtained the confirmation of his pontificate in a new letter patent, whereupon he returned to Brussa. But being again molested by his enemies in that place, he quickly escaped from it and without losing time, he repaired to Constantinople, where he was honoured by many of the Armenians as Pontiff.

Jacob the Pontiff on his proceeding to Constantinople was met at Smyrna by a messenger of Asdvadzadur, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who besought him to hasten thither to consult with him respecting the best means of keeping Eleazar out of the pontificate. Jacob hereupon repaired to that city, where after considering and deciding upon the means they should adopt in order to oppose Eleazar's aiming to the patriarchate of Jerusalem and the pontificate, he set out from that city on his way to Constantinople. But before he had arrived at his journey's end, Eleazar, who was informed of his approach, had received from the Grand Signior his letters patent, by which he was confirmed to the patriarchate and had embarked with 250 pilgrims and pro-

ceeded to Palestine, where he took possession of his see without the smallest opposition.

On the arrival of Jacob the Pontiff at Constantinople, he was received with much honour and respect by the Armenians, and many of Eleazar's partisans captivated with Jacob's gentle behaviour, forsook the cause of the former and became zealous partisans of the latter. Then Jacob, by the advice of his new friends, proceeded to Adrianople, and by means of valuable presents gained over the Grand Signior to revoke Eleazar's appointment and to expedite letters patent, not only confirming Jacob as Pontiff of all the Armenians, but placing at his disposal the patriarchate of Jerusalem. One Mardiros was the appointed patriarch at Jerusalem by Jacob the Pontiff, which coming to the knowledge of Eleazar, he left the city and took refuge at Remla. Jacob the Pontiff having finished his mission at Constantinople, returned to Etchmiadzin in the year 1667.

The patriarchal dignity of Constantinople and Jerusalem, however, after the departure of the Pontiff from the former city, became an object of ambition to several restless individuals, who aiming continually at supplanting each other in that dignity, by bribing the Turkish officers, again filled the Armenian community with confusion.

On the Pontiff Jacob's becoming acquainted with the rapid and extraordinary changes that had taken place in the patriarchate of Constantinople and Jerusalem, he determined, regardless of the infirmities inseparable from his very advanced age, to visit the former city and endeavour to produce tranquillity among those of his nation residing there. He accordingly left Etchmiadzin and arrived at Constantinople in the year 1679. He had previously written to Eleazar to meet him in that city, but the latter who had found means to reoccupy his dignity, fearing for his personal safety, declined doing so, alleging that his duties would not permit him to leave Jerusalem. This was the Pontiff's last journey, as shortly after, falling ill, he died at Constantinople at the age of eighty two, having held the supreme ecclesiastical dignity twenty five years. He was buried at Pera, A. D. 1680.



#### IV

Eleazar is proclaimed Pontiff of the Armenians. — Troubles in the patriarchates of Constantinople and Jerusalem. — Eleazar's death. — Nahabied of Edessa. — His correspondence with Pope Innocent the Twelfth. — Ephraim the Patriarch.

When Eleazar heard of the death of Jacob, he assumed the supreme pontifical authority over all the Armenians dwelling in the Turkish dominions.

After the death of Jacob the pontifical chair of Etchmiadzin remained vacant for two years. Then the clergy of that church approving the pontificate of Eleazar, determined to elect him their Pontiff. For that purpose they went to the chief of Erevan, and, presenting him with the accustomed gifts, obtained his consent and authorization to proceed with such election. Messengers were then despatched to Jerusalem to invite Eleazar to take possession of the pontificate without delay. He immediately proceeded to Constantinople and obtained letters patent constituting him head of the Armenian Church. His first act after this was to consecrate the Patriarch of that city Garabied, bishop, and to confirm him in his

office. He then set out for Etchmiadzin and on his arrival adopted such measures for the government of the clergy of that church as gave satisfaction to all. He repaired the steeple of St. Kayané and built several churches in the desert of Zorakegh.

The patriarchal chairs of Constantinople and Jerusalem again began to be objects of ambition and intrigue. While the clergy were contending about the possession of those dignities, the people were quarrelling with each other upon the different articles of their faith, and, as generally happens, those who knew least about them were the most violent. All this was occasioned by the writings of a Vartabied called Sarkis of Eudocia, who by teaching his views concerning different points of religion, was the cause of many troubles and divisions among the Armenians, through which the followers of sound doctrine suffered severe persecutions.

News of these disturbances having reached Eleazar, he determined to send missionaries among the troubled members of the Armenian flock at Constantinople to exhort them to union and brotherly love. While employed in this design he suddenly fell sick and died after a pontificate of nine years, A. D. 1691.

Nahabied of Edessa was then elected

Pontiff. He was a man of meek disposition and of the most exemplary virtue. He did every thing in his power to restore peace and union among his countrymen. Having heard that many things disparaging to the Armenian faith had been reported by interested malignant persons to Pope Innocent the Twelfth, Nahabied wrote entreating him that nothing against the Armenian persuasion might be believed.

Shortly after Nahabied was expelled from the pontificate and banished from Etchmiadzin, by the intrigues of Stephen bishop of Julpha who immediately occupied the pontifical chair. But his pontificate was very short; for at the end of ten months he was deposed and placed in confinement where he died. He is not reckoned in the list of Pontiffs. After his expulsion Nahabied was restored to his former dignity.

In the year 1697, Pope Innocent the Twelfth replied to the letter of Nahabied, respecting the slanders promulgated at Rome against the Armenians, assuring him of his high consideration, and exhorting him to pay no attention to anything he might hear discreditable to the Roman catholic faith. This letter, accompanied by valuable presents, was brought to Etchmiadzin by Vartabied Khatchadur of Garin.

Ephraim the Patriarch of Constantinople

on becoming acquainted with the correspondence that had taken place between the Pope and Nahabied, became highly indignant, as he considered the independence of the Armenian Church sacrificed by such submission. In his anger against the Pontiff he attempted to create disturbances among the Armenians, but he did not succeed; for shortly after he was deposed and banished and was succeeded by Melchizedek. Eight months after Melchizedek obtained the recall of Ephraim and appointed him bishop of Adrianople. Shortly after Melchizedek was deposed and succeeded by Mekhithar of Kurdistan, who by his mildness restored unanimity and tranquillized the unquiet spirit that had so long disturbed the Armenian community in Constantinople.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

I

A summary glance at the spirit of this epoch and the preachers of latinism. — Two divisions of Sebastie.

We are now about to enter a new period in the history of the Armenian Church, but before doing so it may not be unprofitable to take a summary glance with a view to a complete perception of the spirit of the epoch.

The Armenian Church, upon the establishment of the patriarchal see at Constantinople, had been, in religious unity, in a state of peace; it had suffered no other molestation than that of tribute levied by the infidel conquerors.

The Armenian Pontiffs, with the Greeks, had ever maintained an intimate correspondence with the Roman Pontiff, and this they did with the sincere intention to preserve that religious unity which is the basis of Christianity which they

cessary for the steady progress and upholding of the common faith.

The ground, however, was sown with the seeds of strife through the fanatic doctrines of the Unionists, whence religious divisions had already sprung up, causing some among the Armenians to hate their own Church and its rites and to turn towards that of the Latins.

Now the Armenians residing in Constantinople, which city they regarded as a national center, lived in frequent contact with the Latins and were therefore much more liable to be imbued with intolerant doctrines. Besides this a number of Armenian youth were educated at the Propaganda in Rome, following a course of instruction which excluded all that did not regard the Latin Church; on being sent back as missionaries they naturally endeavoured to spread the principles they had imbibed, which were almost to latinize their own countrymen in order to preserve them exempt from the heresies which had involved the national Church.

The origin of all these innovations is to be found in the writings of a Latin monk named Clemens Galanus, who having lived for a short time in Armenia learned a little of the Armenian language and wrote a book about the Armenian Church and rites

not exempt of error and falsehood. And therefore those who derived their notions of the Armenians exclusively from this book, could see nothing in the doctrines and rites of that nation but heresy and error. No better occupation therefore than to preach against that Church and to convert its followers to latinism, the only true way to salvation. This was accordingly done with such fanaticism as to create dreadful divisions among the Armenian population, one party hating the other and visiting it with every means of annoyance and persecution. The followers of the preachers of latinism being prohibited from frequenting the Armenian churches under pain of excommunication and of being deprived of absolution, avoided attendance on the religious ceremonies of the other party. Becoming bolder also, they began to deride those ceremonies, to insult their clergy and to call them heretics and deprived of any ecclesiastical ordination.

The consequence of this was that the others becoming exasperated answered with reprisals; and as the government was with them, they annoyed the followers of latinism by accusing them as spies of the Latin powers. Thus, persecutions followed which served only to impoverish the nation, to send many individuals to

banishment or to the galleys, and to drive several also to abjure their faith and to become Mahometans.

Religious enmity and national discord were thus incessant, and as they were fomented by the intolerance of both sides an irremediable schism was the consequence and the nation became divided into Roman catholics, or those who followed the preachers of latinism, and those who were firm in the rites of the real Armenian Church, as were the Armenians of Etchmiadzin. The former were few in number and were scattered over several provinces of the Turkish government.

But it is to be remarked that though the Latin followers hated the Armenian Church and its rites, still they were obliged to repair to it for the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Marriage, and for the burial service; the Turkish government not permitting the celebration of those rites in the Latin churches. And the latin preachers were therefore compelled to connive at their penitents going to the Armenian churches for such purposes.

While the Armenians were thus divided, a remarkable man, destined by Divine Providence to effect remarkable things, entered upon the scene. This was Mekhithar, an Armenian priest of the purest life, and a



godly character. With the design of preaching love and unity between his co-nationals, Mekhithar left Sebaste his native city and arriving in Constantinople in the year 1700, presented himself to the Armenian Patriarch and obtained permission to preach in the church of the Holy Illuminator; his eloquence, his energy, his devotion, speedily placed him in a position to realize a project which has exercised and will long continue to exercise an extraordinary and highly beneficial influence on the education and character of his countrymen.

As the study of a gifted and influential character is not without its utility, we shall momentarily suspend our chronicle, in order to give a short biographical sketch of this exemplary man.

Mekhithar was born in the city of Sebaste or Sivas, in the year 1676, and from his early age exhibited proofs of a superior mind. At the age of 15 he received the monk's habit and was named in religion Mekhithar, his secular name having been Manug. Being thus ordained deacon, he devoted himself entirely to the study of the Scriptures and of the Writings of the Fathers, both Greek and Armenian. In order to perfect himself in such studies, he first went to Etchmiadzin, whence he passed to the convent situated on the Island of Sevan.

His efforts, however, to meet with a sojourn where an ascetic life might be conjoined with the study of literature and the sciences, were useless, and he therefore resolved to return to his native city Sebaste. On his journey thither he stopped at Erzeroum, and there made the acquaintance of a rich Armenian who had just returned from Rome. The description of the great city which he heard from that traveller so much excited his curiosity and admiration that he resolved one day to visit it himself.

Returned to Sebaste he re-entered his monastery and gave himself up to theological studies. It was in the calm of this retreat that he matured that great and noble project, which was, as he himself declares, « To found a durable Congregation of devoted individuals, whose object should be to cultivate all necessary and useful sciences, with the final aim of administering to the spiritual necessities of our Nation. »

After remaining for some time in his convent, Mekhithar endeavoured to effect his design of visiting Rome; but on his way to that city he fell dangerously ill and was obliged to return to Sebaste. In the year 1696 he was consecrated priest and having, in the year 1699, received the dignity of Vartabied, that is, Doctor of Theology, he began to exercise his career by

preaching the Gospel to his countrymen throughout Asia Minor. Then, as we mentioned, in the year 1700 he went to Constantinople, accompanied by two of his disciples. He soon became, through his example, his eloquence, and his virtues, the admiration of all the Armenians in that city; and his disciples having increased in number, he sent them as missionaries to preach and to instruct their co-nationals in the different cities of Armenia.

Thus Mekhithar began the execution of his project, and while his disciples were thus employed, he gathered into a house at Pera in Constantinople a number of Armenian youth, in order to bestow on them the benefits of education.

## II

Melchizedek intrigues for the patriarchal authority. — The misfortune of some of the priests of Adrianople. — Melchizedek's disgrace. — Ephraim becomes Patriarch. — Troubles and persecution. — Danger of Mekhithar of Sebaste. — Ephraim is deposed. — Avedik bishop of Ezenga. — The three priests and Mekhithar. — Avedik's disgrace.

While Mekhithar of Sebaste was peacefully occupied by his great work, the patriarchal authority of Constantinople was in

contest. For Melchizedek the deposed Patriarch, after many intrigues succeeded, by the distribution of large bribes, in procuring his own restoration and the expulsion of the Patriarch Mekhithar of Kurdistan.

About this period some priests residing at Adrianople having publicly commended the measures that had been pursued by Nahabied since his elevation to the pontifical chair, Ephraim, the bishop of Adrianople, enemy of the Pontiff, at first caused them to be excommunicated, and afterwards accusing them to the Vizir as engaged in treasonable intercourse with the Franks and other enemies of the state, caused them, innocent, to be taken to the gallies at Constantinople and chained to the oar. Being reproached for this act of cruelty by the Patriarch Melchizedek who had come to Andrianople, Ephraim formed a conspiracy and preferring charges of the basest description against him before the Vizir, caused him to be degraded from the patriarchate and to be sent to join the priests at the gallies.

Ephraim was then reappointed Patriarch; he, however, preferred to remain at Andrianople and to rule by deputy at Constantinople.

The conduct of Ephraim towards Melchizedek caused many troubles among the

Armenians at Canstantinople. Divisions were formed between the people, and the factions increasing in violence, peaceably disposed persons were disgusted at their intolerance and discontinuing attendance at the Armenian places of public worship, began to frequent the Latin or Greek churches.

The tumult daily increasing, Ephraim, being an enemy of the Greeks and Latins as well as of those who adopted the Council of Chalcedon, instead of adopting a conciliatory and tranquilizing course issued directions to his deputy and partisans at Constantinople to seize and imprison all whom they suspected of adhering to the decisions of that Council. In order that his designs should meet with no delay, Ephraim obtained from the Sultan orders of a similar nature to his own by means of the great Mufti, the head of the Mahometan religion in Turkey. The publication of these edicts among the Armenians dwelling throughout the Turkish dominions, caused the tumults only to increase; and though many of those Armenians who were termed Chalcedonians were tortured, and many more were fined, yet their number instead of diminishing increased daily. Numbers of the persecuted Armenians emigrated from Turkey about this period and settled them-

selves in different parts of Asia and Europe. During these troubles Matthew, surnamed Sari, the Pontiff of Sis, was driven from his chair which was seized by a Vartabied named Peter, a native of Aleppo.

While these disturbances were troubling the Armenians at Constantinople, Mekhithar of Sebaste endeavoured to bring the priests and the people to a state of peace and union. His efforts, however, were unavailing and served but to create him enemies, though he had gained the affection and esteem of all the peaceably disposed. Ephraim on hearing of him, endeavoured, by accusing him falsely to the Grand Vizir, to draw upon him the same fate as befel the late Patriarch; but Mekhithar being made acquainted with his intentions, concealed himself and remained for a time in retirement.

While Ephraim was acting thus, Avedik bishop of Ezenga, a very learned man, distinguished himself in Constantinople. By his influence with the Mufti, who was also a native of Ezenga, he succeeded in supplanting Ephraim and in being elected Patriarch in his room. Ephraim took refuge in Etchmiadzin; his substitute at Constantinople shared his disgrace, being superseded by Vartabied John of Amasia, a disciple of Avedik. The new Patriarch im-

mediately after his elevation wrote letters of brotherhood and peace to all the Armenian churches in Asia, and endeavoured to pacify the Armenians by causing the persecution against the Chalcedonians to cease.

Avedik, however, was an enemy of Minas, Patriarch of Jerusalem, four of whose priests coming to Adrianople, accused him of various crimes committed in the patriarchate of Constantinople. Avedik, seeing his opportunity, laid accusations against Minas before the Sultan who ordered him to be deposed, and by the influence of the Mufti, the Patriarch of Constantinople was appointed also Patriarch of Jerusalem. Avedik then removed John of Amasia from Constantinople to Jerusalem, appointing in his room John of Smyrna. Such prosperity began to have an evil effect on Avedik. Having proceeded with great pomp to Constantinople, he arrested a number of the heads of the Armenian community there, accusing them of having apostatized and of becoming Roman Catholics. His motive for thus acting was avarice; since all those who had been seized, were released on payment of a heavy fine. By these means he collected immense treasures, and as he enjoyed the protection of his friend the Mufti, his many

outrageous acts were committed with impunity.

The three priests who as we have related, had been condemned by Ephraim to the galleys, procured their release at this time on payment of a heavy fine. These unfortunate men being allied with Mekhithar of Sebaste, immediately visited him in the convent whither he had fled from the persecution of the late patriarch. This being noticed by Avedik, he complained to the Vizir against them, and endeavoured to seize and send them together with Mekhithar, to the galleys. They all, however, had time to escape and take refuge in the Latin Monastery of Capuchin Friars at Pera. Avedik then endeavoured to induce the Superior of that convent to deliver Mekhithar and the three priests up to him, promising to do all in his power to effect a union between the Latin and Armenian churches; stating moreover that he required pecuniary aid and the assistance of Mekhithar and of the three priests. The Superior being deluded, consented, and procured him the money he asked for. But on acquainting Mekhithar and the three priests with this scheme, trying to convince them by showing the letter of Avedik that his promises were sincere and that they had nothing to fear, he was probably undeceived, as Mekhithar



knowing the craft and bad faith of Avedik refused to go ; feeling, however, that his staying longer in the same monastery might be dangerous, he took the earliest opportunity to escape. But the three priests, confiding in the promises of the Patriarch, gave up themselves to him together with their families, and they were immediately fettered and placed in a strongly guarded house for the purpose of being brought before the Vizir. Hereupon the private friends of the priests forcing the doors of the house where they were imprisoned, released them by night. In the affray that attended this act, Avedik, who had attempted to defend the house, was assaulted and severely bruised by the friends of the prisoners. The latter lost no time in leaving the city, as they knew that the Patriarch would complain to the Vizir at the dawn of day.

Early in the morning Avedik, furious at the result of the night's contest, repaired to the Vizir and made his complaint. But, contrary to all his expectations, he was condemned by the Vizir for having, without authority, administered justice and kept prisons for criminals. He was forthwith sent by the Vizir to the common gaol where he remained several days, until at the intercession of his friend the Mufti, he was released

on payment of nine purses of money. On obtaining his liberty his first step was to conciliate the favour of the Vizir, through whom he obtained an order to seize and send to the gallies the deliverers of the three priests who were the cause of his temporary disgrace. Shortly after he was directed to leave Adrianople and take up his residence in Constantinople, the better to watch over the affairs of his Church.

### III

Mekhithar in Modone. — He escapes to Venice where he settles his Community. — He founds a printing office. — Charges against Avedik. — He is imprisoned. — Kalusd Gaydzaguen proclaimed Patriarch. — Troubles on account of Avedik. — He is sent into banishment. — Vartabied Nierses. — Avedik is restored. — He is again banished.

While Avedik was immersed in the troubles resulting from his violent proceedings against the three priests, Mekhithar of Sebaste, in order to escape from his enemies and to carry out his life's object, bethought himself of seeking a more propitious shore. He therefore directed a number of his disciples to proceed separately to Modone,

the principal city in the Morea, where he, in company with three others, soon after joined them and was received with honour and hospitality.

The Venetians, who at that epoch held possession of the Morea, having treated him with benevolence and relieved his necessities, he finally in the year 1708 found himself in a position to lay the foundations of his Monastery, which in a brief period became the rallying place of enthusiastic and devoted disciples.

His next care was to subject his community to fixed rules. He therefore sent two of his disciples to Rome in order to obtain the papal sanction and advice, which Clement XI, the reigning pope, most readily accorded, and it was in compliance with his suggestion that the rule of St. Benedict and the garb of St. Anthony the Abbot were adopted by the new family.

The paternal care of Mekhithar had conducted the society to prosperity and peace, when war broke out between the Turks and the Venetians. Success was on the side of the former who at length advanced against and captured Modone, when Mekhithar, in order to avoid falling into the hands of the Turks, from whom he could expect no good on account of the accusation formerly made against him by the patriarch Avedik, was

obliged to seek safety elsewhere; wherefore, accompanied by eleven of the brotherhood he fled to Venice, having lost all he possessed.

It was in the year 1715 that he landed on the Piazzetta of St. Mark, and after persevering instances and being supported by several of the grandees of the Republic, he was permitted, in the year 1717, to establish himself on the island of St. Lazaro. He there succeeded in erecting a new Monastery, and having established his community therein, he steadily followed out his project of instructing Armenian youth and sending them forth as missionaries to Armenia.

But though he lived far from the world and in the retirement of his island, yet he was not to be free from persecution. The malignity of his enemies excited against him the suspicions of the Court of Rome, and accused him as favouring the heretical doctrines of the dissenting Armenians. In order to avoid the dreaded destruction of his institution, he was obliged to proceed to Rome; where by much tribulation his virtue and humility were made manifest and he succeeded not only in dissipating the doubts excited against him, but in obtaining the Pope's friendship and his sanction to send his disciples,

whenever he choose, as missionaries to the East for the enlightenment and education of their co-nationals.

Having succeeded thus far, Mekhithar returned to his peaceful island, where he devoted himself entirely to the development of the moral and material welfare of his disciples and to the embellishment of his Monastery. And truly it is matter for astonishment that a poor man, such as he was, deprived of any private resources, could raise from its foundations an edifice so complete in its arrangements and so striking in its aspect as to command general admiration. But he was the man destined by Providence to prepare the way for the amelioration of his people.

One of the first acts of Mekhithar after having solidly established himself in the newly built Monastery, was to found in Venice a printing office to enable him the better to diffuse knowledge, and to promote literary progress among the Armenians. This printing office was in the year 1788 removed to the Monastery where the publication of the literary labours of the brotherhood is still continued.

Leaving Mekhithar to the prosecution of his work in the island of St. Lazaro, we must return to our narrative of events at Constantinople.

Not long after Avedik, the Patriarch, had fixed his residence in Constantinople, several of the Armenian inhabitants of that city proceeded to Adrianople and laid heavy charges against him; the Vizir thereupon ordered a courier to be immediately despatched to the former city to convey the Patriarch before his tribunal. On the arrival of the courier Avedik was struck with consternation, and in order to prepare for his defence bribed the messenger to remain a few days at Constantinople. This time was occupied in writing to his friend the Mufti, who advised him to come to Adrianople without delay, and to provide himself with recommendations from the chief magistrate of the capital, and with certificates from the members of his Church proving his innocence. These he obtained by threatening the populace with the vengeance of the Blessed Illuminator, and by thus working on them till they went in a large body to the deputy Vizir crying out that Avedik was their benefactor, and that he alone deserved to be their Patriarch. This had the desired effect and Avedik having obtained the certificates he required, proceeded to Adrianople, where by the assistance of his friend the Mufti he cleared himself from the charges that had been brought against him.

During the absence of the Patriarch from Constantinople, his substitute John of Smyrna began to fine the Armenians without discrimination, declaring that they had all become Roman catholics. This was the cause of great commotions not only in Constantinople, but throughout the Turkish dominions. But as much trouble temporarily existed among the Turks in the capital of the empire concerning the Mufti or head of their religion, one party seeking to have him deposed, the other to support him in his office, John was induced by the fear of drawing the attention of the Turks to himself, to desist from his acts of intolerance.

Shortly after this Avedik returned to the capital, and becoming acquainted with the disturbances that had taken place, went on to Chrysopolis accompanied by Joseph bishop of Rodosto. No sooner did the party adverse to the Mufti hear that the Armenian Patriarch was at Chrysopolis, and that he was a friend of the Mufti, than they sent thither a party of soldiers by night, who surrounded the house in which he was, and on the morning they took him prisoner. He was immediately fettered, brought to Constantinople and thrown into the prison called the Seven Towers.

These events happened in the year 1703, but no sooner had public affairs reassumed an appearance of order than the principal Armenians residing at Constantinople succeeded in elevating to the patriarchate the Vartabied Kalusd surnamed Gaydzaguen, and in restoring Minas to the patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The Armenians being informed of this act, sanctioned moreover by the Sultan, were as usual divided; many were content but the greater number were adherents of Avedik and they assaulted the Vicar who announced it in the church, and beat him in a most violent manner. On the news of this outrage reaching the Vizir, he caused fifteen of the ringleaders to be taken and sent to the galleys. As for Avedik on whose account the disturbance took place, he directed him to be banished to the island of Avrad Adasy. To degrade him as much as possible in the eyes of the populace, the Vizir caused him to be led to the ship, which was to conduct him to the place of his exile, with his hands bound behind his back and a halter round his neck. The friends of Avedik vainly endeavoured to procure his release by presenting petitions to the Sultan and to the Vizir, they found the authorities inflexible. Many of the petitioners on behalf of Avedik suf-



ferred punishments on account of their incessant importunities. Several were sent to the gallies, others bastinadoed.

At length the adherents of Avedik finding that nothing was to be effected in his favour by violence, determined at the instigation of a Vartabied named Nierses, a native of Constantinople, to try the effect of bribes. For this purpose they collected a large sum of money and placed it at the disposal of Nierses, whom they held to be a zealous partisan of the late Patriarch. Nierses distributed this treasure to the influential officers about the Sultan and the Vizir, and in a short time obtained the deposition of Kalusd, whom he accused of being a traitor to the state, and who was forthwith condemned to the gallies. Thereupon Nierses took possession of the patriarchal dignity, and no small commotion ensued amongst the Armenians; for the partisans of Avedik becoming furious at the imposture of which they had been the victims, set no bounds to their violence against the usurper and redoubled their efforts to release Avedik.

The heads of the Armenian Community fearing the result of the dreadful commotions which then prevailed amongst the people, determined to solicit Avedik's recall. They accordingly went to the Vizir

and preferring their request declared that upon Avedik's return the peace of their Church alone depended. The Vizir refused to accede to their petition, arguing that Avedik was so unquiet in his disposition that he could hope for no good results from his return; but overcome at length by their importunities he gave an order for his liberation and reappointment to the patriarchate.

Avedik on his return to the patriarchate began to harass the people dreadfully; he next by means of intrigue succeeded in re-obtaining the patriarchate of Jerusalem, after causing Minas to be banished to the island of Cyprus, where he died. Becoming then still more tyrannical than ever, Avedik began to fine every wealthy person of his Congregation, on the charge of an undue predilection for the Roman persuasion. His arrogance at length rose to such a point as to fine without cause an individual attached to the suite of the French ambassador who immediately complained of him to the government. This becoming known to the Armenians, thirty of the most considerable among them preferred a complaint to the Vizir against the Patriarch. The Vizir summoned Avedik before him, and asking him how he dared presume to annoy the French ambassador by

persecuting one of his suite, ordered him to be bastinadoed, then to be stripped of his patriarchal robes and to be banished to the island of Tenedos. But while on his way to that place, he fell into the hands of the French, who to revenge the outrage they had received from him, took him to Marseilles, whence he was removed to Paris and there confined in the prison of the Temple. Finding himself utterly abandoned Avedik in the solitude of his prison remembered the haughtiness and perverseness of his past life, sincerely repented and became a changed man. Which being observed by the government, he was pardoned and released; and passing the remainder of his days in pious works, he finally died in peace.

#### IV

Death of Nahabied the Pontiff. — Alexander of Julpha his successor. — Matthew of Cesarea and other Patriarchs. — John of Smyrna and his aversion to the Roman catholics. — Der Gomidas. — John's deposition. — Isaac reinstated. — John of Kan'zag. — Death of the Pontiff Alexander. — Asdvadzadur of Hamadan his successor.

In the same year (1705) that Avedik was banished Nahabied the Pontiff died at Etchmiadzin, after presiding over the Ar-

menian Church fourteen years. In consequence of the disturbed state of the people, the pontificate remained vacant for rather more than a year, when Alexander of Julpha was called to the post. Alexander previous to his elevation had been an enemy to those who adhered to the council of Chalcedon as well as to the authority of the Pope, against whom he had also written a book. But as soon as he was elected Pontiff at Etchmiadzin, his first act was to address, in the name of the whole nation, a respectful letter to the Pope notifying his election to the pontificate.

The patriarchal chair of Constantinople, after Avedik's expulsion, was occupied by Matthew of Cesarea, surnamed Sari, but he remained in it only two months. Mardiros succeeded him after the space of four months; he again was succeeded by one named Michael. This last after eight months was displaced to make room for Vartabied Isaac.

Shortly after, A. D. 1707, John of Smyrna, formerly Avedik's deputy at Constantinople, returned from Jerusalem, and having formed a party principally composed of the partisans of his master, he effected Isaac's deposition and his own appointment. John, as a true disciple of Avedik, immediately after his accession to the pontifical chair

began in a violent manner to inveigh against the Roman catholics and to make remarks on the personal conduct of those members of his Congregation whom he suspected to be inclined to that persuasion. The consequence of this conduct was the loss of a great part of his Congregation, who to avoid insult, forebore going to the Armenian churches. Hence arose another cause of discord between the Roman catholics and the Armenians, and they now began to regard each other with feelings of the sincerest hatred and detestation.

Many well disposed Armenians endeavoured, but in vain, to allay the animosity between the two divisions. The principal of these was Der Gomidas, one of the priests of St. George's church, a man of eminent parts and enjoying almost universal respect. Some of the Armenian clergy as well as of the laity, moved by envy, excited the resentment of John the Patriarch against him, who thrust him into the hands of the Turks, charging him as being a follower of the Franks or Europeans and an enemy to the State. As soon as Gomidas was brought before the judges, he was asked who he was and to what nationality he belonged. He answered : « I am a Christian and a follower of St. Gregory the Illuminator, Armenian by birth, subject and tribu-

tary of the Sultan. » Several Armenians also testified that he was a peaceful and innocent man and not a Frank or one of those who favoured the Europeans and served them as a spy.

The intolerant Patriarch, however, and a number of priests pushing their enmity to the utmost, denounced him as a convert to Latinism and consequently a rebel to the Sultan. Notwithstanding this, the judges, aware of his innocence, sought to acquit him. When the Patriarch advancing and parading the distinctives of his dignity forced them to pronounce sentence of death declaring that unless they did so the troubles of the nation would not cease. On this declaration, the judges, throwing the responsibility of the innocent blood upon the accusers, sentenced him to be decapitated. Gomidas being then brought to the place of execution, was, according to customary use, exhorted to embrace the Mahometan religion in order to escape death. But he boldly answered : « Although they should cut me to pieces, I will never deny Jesus Christ. » Thereupon he was decapitated on the 25<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1707. He is regarded as a Saint, and many miracles were wrought upon his tomb.

This persecution and death of Gomidas caused, and not without apparent reason,

many among the Armenians to become apostates.

John at length became so tyrannical that his flock were obliged to depose him and to reinstate Isaac. This latter at first conducted himself with moderation, but after three years he also began to persecute with unrelenting vigour all whom he suspected of being favourable to the Roman catholic persuasion. So much was the Vizir annoyed by the incessant complaints of Isaac against the members of his Church, that he at length ordered him never to appear before him with a complaint respecting the Roman catholic religion.

Isaac at length having destituted the bishop of Rodosto, the latter immediately repaired to Constantinople and having there formed partisans, he presented himself before the Vizir and inveighing against the arbitrary proceeding of which he had been the victim, demanded redress; thereupon the Vizir ordered Isaac to be deposed and another to be elected.

While the Armenians were undecided with regard to their choice, a Vartabied named John, native of Kantzag, and a person of exemplary piety, presented himself as a candidate for the patriarchate, and convening an assembly of the Armenians spoke with such eloquence and apparent zeal

for the service of God that he was unanimously chosen to succeed Isaac. But he proved little better than his predecessors, for on observing that those of the Armenians who favoured the Romish persuasion, did not attend his churches, he began to harass them; this brought on a crisis and a number of the persecuted having united in one society, agreed to elect a Patriarch for themselves and to have separate churches. Their attempts at obtaining these objects were, however, all fruitless; many of them suffered penalties, others were imprisoned and several denied their faith. In several towns dependent on the patriarchate of Constantinople similar attempts were made, all ending in the same manner. News of these unhappy discords coming from time to time to the Pontiff Alexander, he was so grieved that he at length fell ill and died of a broken heart, in the eighth year of his pontificate, A. D. 1715.

Asdvadzadur, a native of Hamadan or Ecbatana, succeeded him. He considerably beautified the interior of the church of Etchmiadzin, placing various paintings on the walls and decorating the altar with gilt ornaments.



V

Condition of St. Jacob's Convent in Jerusalem. — John Golod and Gregory Rector of St. Garabied. — The Latin Vicar's edict. — Rigors against the catholic Armenians.

The Convent of St. Jacob at Jerusalem was at this period in the greatest pecuniary embarrassment, its debts amounting to the enormous sum of 800 purses of piastres. This was occasioned by the improvident conduct of the deputies sent to Jerusalem while that patriarchate was held by the Patriarch of Constantinople; these deputies squandered away the treasure lying in the convent, and were obliged to borrow at high interest for its daily exigencies. The creditors at length seeing no prospect of obtaining payment, obtained an order from the Turkish government to seize the convent together with the lands with which it was endowed and dispose of them to the highest bidder. On the arrival of this intelligence at Constantinople there was in that city a Vartabied named John Golod, esteemed as a man of talent and discretion. The Armenians in that city sent him therefore to Jerusalem

to endeavour to avert the evil with which St. Jacob's convent was threatened. On his arrival at Jerusalem he compromised with the creditors of the convent, undertaking to clear off its debts in four years by yearly instalments. He then returned to Constantinople and stating what he had done, strongly advised, as a preliminary economical measure, to appoint separate Patriarchs for Constantinople and Jerusalem. The Armenians offered then to elect him Patriarch of Constantinople, but he hesitated to accept it, fearing, as he said, to meet with the fate of the preceding Patriarchs, who had retained their dignity but a very short time, and then he should be worse than destitute, having the debts of St. Jacob's to pay. He was then assured that his authority should be upheld if he would undertake the government of their church. He at length consented and John of Kantzag voluntarily relinquished his office. Thus John of Balesh surnamed Golod was appointed Patriarch of Constantinople, though he was not yet consecrated bishop. The following day while he was performing high Mass, he ordered from his place before the altar, Gregory Rector of the Monastery of St. Garabied, to be nominated Patriarch of Jerusalem. These two appointments were shortly

after confirmed by the Sultan's decree, A. D. 1717.

From this period these two exemplary men acted in concert in reducing the debts of the church of Jerusalem, and their indefatigable exertions were at length crowned with the realization of their desires. Gregory was so zealous in this labour that he placed a heavy chain round his neck and vowing to wear it until the debts of St. Jacob's were paid, he wore it for eight years. It was customary with him on all festival days to stand in the porch of the church of the Holy Mother of God and exclaim: « Followers of Christ! Let pity touch your hearts! My home is mortgaged, and I have not whereon to lay my head. My place is on the throne of St. Jacob; but I am now surrounded by creditors far from my home, and there is no one to deliver me from them. Help! followers of Christ! Oh! Help!» By this means he obtained large sums from the people towards his object, but its final attainment was considerably delayed by an untoward event; a dreadful fire broke out in Constantinople which lasted thirty four hours. Fifteen thousand people perished in the flames and fifty thousand houses were destroyed. The church of the Holy Mother of God was also burnt. This misfortune plung-

ed the two Patriarchs into the deepest distress; for the necessary rebuilding of the church exhausted nearly all the funds they had collected. Finally, however, they surmounted every obstacle, and the debts being paid, the Patriarch Gregory proceeded to Jerusalem, where he zealously employed himself for the benefit of his church.

John the Patriarch of Constantinople, after the departure of Gregory, also applied himself assiduously to promote the welfare of his people. Some of his churches in Constantinople being burnt to the ground, he rebuilt them with much taste and elegance. He instituted a school in Skudar for the education of the children of the poor. Many valuable latin works were by his order translated into Armenian.

The pacific character of this Patriarch contributed much to calm the religious differences, and a considerable degree of harmony was restored. The immediate consequence was the establishment of a friendly correspondence between the two divisions, on which the catholics began to return to the national Armenian churches. This good feeling, however, did not last long; for the Roman Apostolic Vicar at Constantinople having been made acquainted with the fact and fearing its results,

published an edict forbidding all European missionaries to impart absolution to such among the catholic Armenians as might frequent the national churches. This edict nearly produced a crisis, and while it caused an abrupt separation of the catholics, irritated the Armenians of Etchmiadzin against them.

John the Patriarch, actuated by brotherly love, endeavoured to pacify both sides. He wrote to the Roman Vicar of Constantinople, beseeching him to mitigate the severity of his commands and to allow the catholic Armenians to frequent the Armenian churches at least on the occasion of certain festivals. He represented to him that there was virtually no difference between the creed of the Armenians of his Congregation and that of the Latins. He said in his letter : « We admit all that you admit and reject all that you reject. What is the cause then of such animosity between our flocks? » All his efforts at reconciliation were, however, vain and at length he was forced to act against the catholics. For several of the Armenian bishops of the provinces, irritated against the proceedings of the Armenians followers of the Latins, complained to the Vizir, accusing the Patriarch of neglecting to punish those of the Armenians followers

of the Franks, who by causing troubles in the nation were rebels to the State. Whereupon John, after endeavouring to use other conciliatory measures, was obliged to permit that such Armenians as were surprised in the act of entering the Latin churches should be imprisoned. A great persecution ensued against all the Armenian Roman catholics throughout the Turkish empire, causing much bloodshed and distress both sides.

## VI

**Death of Asdvadzadur the Pontiff. — Garabied of Ului his successor and other Pontiffs. — Severities against the catholic Armenians. — The convent of St. Jacob. — Death of Abraham the Third. — Lazarus bishop of Smyrna elected Pontiff. — His danger. — He flees to Persia. — Sufferings of bishop Isaac. — He excommunicates Lazarus. — Lazarus anointed Pontiff. — Lazarus and the Persian chiefs. — His punishment. — Death of the patriarch John Golod. — Jacob Nalian.**

The country about Mount Ararat at the same time was so much disturbed and life and property were so insecure, that the Pontiff Asdvadzadur found it dangerous to remain permanently in Etchmiadzin, which

was the usual seat of the pontificate. Hence he led a wandering life, never remaining many days in one place.

During a sojourn of a few days in the village of Oshagan an eclipse of the moon took place; the Pontiff with some priests went to the top of the house in which he lodged to view it to more advantage; while gazing upwards, his foot slipped and he fell over the low parapet to the ground in consequence of which he died a few hours after, A. D. 1725, having held the pontifical dignity ten years.

Garabied, a native of Ulni or Zeithun, archbishop of Galatea, succeeded. He was elected at Constantinople with the consent of John the Patriarch and of the bishops; he immediately consecrated the patriarch John a bishop, as he exercised the patriarchal office without that dignity. Garabied some time after his election held a council at Constantinople and enacted three canons for the observance of the patriarchate at Jerusalem. Then he wrote a letter to Pope Innocent the Thirteenth to notify his election to the pontificate. Garabied after exercising the pontificate quietly for four years, died at Etchmiadzin, A. D. 1730.

Abraham the Second then was elected Pontiff of the Armenians and died five years after. A year before he was elected

Pontiff, a Zerazadig or wrong Easter occurred; this created such disturbances between Greeks and Armenians that they fought against each other and two men on each side were killed.

Abraham the Third, a native of the island of Crete and bishop of Rodosto, succeeded to the pontificate at the death of the last Pontiff. He was born of a Greek mother and was elevated to the pontificate by mere accident. He had left his diocese to perform a pilgrimage to Etchmiadzin, and he so much conciliated the clergy during his sojourn there, that on the death of Abraham the Second, he was unanimously chosen to succeed him. This Pontiff some time after was invited by Thahmaz Kouly Khan to visit him on the plains of Moughan, and to bless his sword and gird it on him, in order to shew the absolute power he held over the Armenians. He was afterwards honoured with valuable presents from the king and was permitted to return peacefully to Etchmiadzin.

Much contention arose about this period between the two parties in Constantinople; the Roman catholics brought on themselves much persecution from the other Armenians who were sufficiently intolerant.

The Greeks also in the same year renewed their old claim to the convent of St.



Jacob's at Jerusalem, and very nearly obtained an imperial decree for its restitution. Just before this was effected the Armenians applied to the French ambassador to intercede with the government for them, and by his influence the Greeks were baffled in their design.

The Pontiff Abraham the Third died in the year 1737, after a pontificate of three years. Some of the clergy of Etchmiadzin wished to elect Gregory, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Pontiff, but others desired to appoint Lazar bishop of Smyrna, a native of Jahug; a third party was also formed, contrary to both candidates, and desirous of electing one Peter, surnamed Kewthur, the late Pontiff's nuncio to the Armenians of Constantinople. Lazarus proved successful.

Immediately after his election Lazarus left Smyrna, neglecting to procure letters patent from the Sultan confirming him in his office. He proceeded with great pomp to Erzeroum where he was received with much respect by Isaac the Armenian bishop of the city. The governor of the city was surprised at the splendour displayed by the Pontiff, and though he disliked it, yet remained silent. Having observed a magnificent horse in the train of Lazarus, he sent to request it as a present, but was refused. He hereupon summoned Lazarus before his

tribunal and demanded by what authority he had assumed the title and state of Pontiff of the Armenian Church. As Lazarus did not possess the government authorization he was ordered to be thrown into the prison. The vindictive governor then wrote to the Vizir at Constantinople a most exaggerated account of the state and arrogance, as he termed it, which Lazarus had displayed since he left Smyrna. The Vizir on receiving the governor's report sent orders for Lazarus to be immediately conveyed to Constantinople. Previous, however, to the receipt of these orders Lazarus, in order to procure his release, presented the governor with the horse which he had at first requested, together with a valuable diamond ring.

Being adverse to the Roman catholics, one day in conversation with the governor, he spoke in such terms as to excite him against them. Isaac bishop of the city being present during their discourse, imagined that a persecution should ensue, wherefore he retired to Passen. The governor considering that a favourable opportunity for enriching himself, seized many of the Armenian catholics of the city, and after fining left them free. But he suddenly fell sick and died. On this event taking place the Turkish magistrates of the city held an assembly and imagining that the governor had been visited by

the divine wrath, in consequence of his persecuting the Roman catholics, they determined to punish the individual whom they suspected to have instigated him to it. This was Lazarus who was forthwith sent for and informed that he was to be instantly led to execution. Lazarus on hearing his condemnation adroitly threw the whole of the blame upon the bishop Isaac, and accompanying his assertions with presents of great value to each of the magistrates, he obtained his release, and then with their permission, he immediately set out for Kars, followed by most of the suite with which he made his entry into Erzeroum. Soon after he had left the city the Vizir's order for his attendance at Constantinople arrived. A courier was immediately despatched to Kars to arrest him, but the Pontiff aware of his danger fled into Persia. The magistrates of Erzeroum then sent a party of troops to Passen and seized bishop Isaac. He was brought to the city his hands tied behind his back, and his legs bound under the horse on which he was mounted. He was thrown into the common gaol where ten convicted felons were confined. Some of the magistrates were for putting him to death without delay; others wished him to be detained in prison until the arrival of the new governor, when he could be regularly tried.

The unfortunate Isaac seeing his danger, petitioned the magistrates and solemnly swore that he was innocent of the crimes alleged against him. Having raised a large sum of money, amounting to about 7000 deniers, he presented it to them and promised if they would release him that he would pay them in a specified time as much more. On this condition he was released; the day after he assembled an assembly of the Armenian inhabitants of Erzeroum in his principal church and after making known the ill treatment he had received at the hands of Lazarus, solemnly excommunicated him; at the same time he prohibiting his name from being mentioned in the diocese.

In the mean time Lazarus reaching Etchmiadzin, had been anointed supreme head of the Armenian Church, and hearing of the steps Isaac had taken, he was excessively angered; but Peter, surnamed Kewthur, mediating between them, persuaded Lazarus to reimburse the former the sums he had been obliged to pay to obtain his release, and eventually effected a reconciliation.

Some few years after this event, a dispute arose between Lazarus and the great prince of Persia Mahmud Beg, in consequence of which the former was seized and by order of the king was about to be put to

death, when he obtained pardon and release by paying a fine of twenty thousand *thumans*.

Another dispute arose between Lazarus and the Persian chief minister Fetih Ali of Asdabad, on account of which the latter complained to the king and Lazarus was summoned to the royal presence. The king at that time was encamped, and Lazarus, who did not suspect that any harm was intended him, obeying the summons, entered the Persian camp in great state and pitched a splendid tent not far from the royal pavillion. The king observing this splendid tent asked to whom it belonged, and being informed that it belonged to Lazarus, Pontiff of the Armenians, he ordered it to be instantly destroyed and Lazarus to be thrown on the ground and beaten on the face with an iron gauntlet. The Pontiff's features were, by this punishment, almost destroyed; he was then imprisoned and not released until he had paid a fine of 1500 *thumans*, A. D. 1740. During his confinement, which lasted about five months, the pontifical duties were performed by John of Agulis, who was appointed Vicar by order of the king. On his release Lazarus returned to Etchmiadzin and resumed the duties of his office.

In the year 1741, John surnamed Golod,

Patriarch of Constantinople died after holding that dignity four years. He wrote a confession of faith and forwarded it to Rome through the medium of the Roman Apostolic Vicar at Constantinople.

His successor was his disciple Jacob, surnamed Naljan, a native of the village of Zimar. During his patriarchate many disputes arose, in consequence of which the catholic Armenians suffered much from the intolerance of their antagonists.

## VII

### New Armenian Catholic Pontificate on Mount Libanon.

We may here narrate an episode which though not materially affecting the Church in Armenia, is still not without interest.

There are on Mount Libanon three Armenian churches with Armeno-Roman catholic bishops, priests and monks. The difficult access and wild configuration of that district, does not, however, allow the agglomeration of dwellings or the establishment of a resident population around these churches; wherefore the inmates of the monasteries live a lonely and secluded life and

naturally have no congregation to whose spiritual necessities they can administer. But on the other hand they are undisturbed by contest or controversy, for there are none to create strife. The chief dignitary in these monasteries, placed at the head of several bishops and monks, leads a secluded life but enjoys pontifical rank, granted about this period by Pope Benedict XIV.

For, in the year 1737, Luke the Pontiff of Sis dying, some of the Armenian bishops of his jurisdiction elected one Abraham, already bishop of Trebizond, and at the time of his election bishop of Aleppo, to succeed him. He was a pious and virtuous man, and having judiciously governed the churches of these two cities, he attracted the attention of the bishops who now elected him to succeed Luke the deceased Pontiff of Sis.

Abraham on being informed of his election set out for Rome in order to obtain the pallium from the hands of the Roman Pontiff. At the end of three year's travel he arrived at Rome; at length in the year 1750 obtained the pallium from Pope Benedict XIV, who named him Pontiff of the Armenians of Cylicia. Abraham wishing to indicate his reverence for the Apostolical See, assumed the name of Peter; and this example was followed by his successors, who all assumed the same name.

Having thus obtained the pallium Abraham set out on his return to Cylicia. But on his arrival he found the pontifical chair of Sis occupied. For the bishops of the pontificate who had not taken part in his election finding that it had only been supported by few of the bishops, held an assembly and declaring it invalid, elected one Michael.

Abraham on seeing himself thus supplanted bethought himself of retiring to one of the beforementioned monasteries on Mount Libanon; for that purpose he wrote to the Roman Pontiff to exchange his first destination for this last. His wish was gratified and his successors have continued in the enjoyment of their dignity down to the present day.

Such was the origin of the Armeno-Catholic pontificate of Mount Libanon, with jurisdiction limited to Cylicia.



## VIII

**Cruelties of Lazarus. — Complaints of the clergy of Etchmiadzin. — Punishment inflicted upon Lazarus by the Persian Monarch. — Tyranny exercised by Lazarus upon the clergy of Etchmiadzin. — Deputies sent by the Armenians of Constantinople to Etchmiadzin. — Lazarus is deposed. — Peter Kewthur anointed Pontiff. — Lazarus restored. — Peter Kewthur imprisoned and his death.**

The first act of Lazarus when he resumed his office, was to seize upon the Vartabieds Peter Kewthur and Alexander of Constantinople and cause them to be severely bastinadoed on a frivolous pretext. They were then thrown into prison and kept there in fetters until they had signed a paper, in which they were forced to acknowledge debts they had never contracted, and to confess that the chastisement they had received was the due reward of offences which they had never committed; after signing this paper they were restored to liberty. A few days after Peter Kewthur, fearing further violence from Lazarus, fled to Kars; whereupon Lazarus caused all the Vartabied's intimate friends to be seized and bastinadoed. Peter however, having received the Pontiff's assurance that no outrage was intended him returned to Etchmiadzin.

But a few days after his arrival he was seized by order of Lazarus and placed in strict confinement. Some time after, a band of nine ruffians sent by Lazarus entered the prison by night and binding Peter hand and foot, beat him severely with cudgels, and then shaved his beard with a razor that drew blood from his chin at every stroke. He was also removed into a dismal dungeon and irons were placed upon his hands and feet. Here he lay some days and was then removed to the island of Sevan, where he remained in confinement six months. At the end of this period Lazarus permitted his release, and he took refuge in Erzeroum, whence he wrote circulars to all the Armenian churches, containing an account of all he had suffered.

The clergy of Etchmiadzin at length began to complain of the Pontiff, and in a letter which they addressed to the Patriarch of Constantinople, they represented that they could no longer bear with him.

Lazarus next embroiled himself with two individuals who being threatened by him with great punishment, they in revenge accused the Pontiff to the Persian Monarch as being in secret possession of a sum of money amounting to four thousand *thumans*, belonging to a rebellious Armenian named Manutchar. The Pontiff being summoned

before the king, was afraid to deny it, and on his admitting the accusation the king immediately ordered him to be fined 5500 *thumans*. Lazarus payed 2100 and fled to Erzeroum. The officers of the king then seized upon the cathedral of Etchmiadzin and stripped it of its gold and silver ornaments, but all was found to be insufficient to pay the fine. They then threatened to torture the clergy residing there, unless they quickly produced the remainder of the money. The priests alarmed and distressed, appealed to the more opulent inhabitants of Erevan and obtained sufficient to pay the fine. An account of the enormities committed by Lazarus was forthwith written and sent by them to all the Armenian churches, but it had no immediate effect, as he shortly after returned to Etchmiadzin, resumed his authority, and renewed his persecutions.

Being informed that the clergy of Etchmiadzin were discontented with his conduct, he took two of the principal malcontents and exiled them. Then compiling a document in which he extolled his own conduct and the manner in which the interests of the church had been promoted by himself, he compelled all the clergy who were about him to sign it, and copies were transmitted to all the churches which had just before received the report that declared

his reputation to be of the worst description.

An assembly was in consequence held at Constantinople to ascertain the general feeling of the Armenians with respect to Lazarus. The result was that Peter Kewthur and Isaac bishop of Erzeroum, were sent to Etchmiadzin to examine the conduct of the Pontiff, and if necessary to destitute him. On their arrival at Etchmiadzin they found the gates shut by the Pontiff's order, and therefore they went to Erevan. Lazarus in the mean time drew up a long list of complaints against them, compelling the clergy to sign it, and immediately proceeding to Tabriz presented it to the governor, demanding assistance.

The governor, however, being made acquainted with the character of the two deputies, sent him back to Etchmiadzin and directed the governor of Erevan to assemble the Armenian clergy and laity, and ascertain whom they wished to be their Pontiff. This was done, and the assembly declaring they would have a new Pontiff instead of Lazarus, the governor directed him to be immediately arrested and transported to the island of Sevan. Then the Armenians retired to Etchmiadzin, and their choice having fallen on Peter Kewthur, he was duly anointed and commenced the

duties of his office by excommunicating his predecessor; he wrote in the mean time to all the Armenian churches an account of what had recently taken place in the pontificate.

Notwithstanding all this, and though Lazarus was twice anathematized in Constantinople and Etchmiadzin, yet as he had many partisans he was enabled, with their assistance, to bribe the authorities to release him, and shortly after, to the consternation of the clergy, a royal mandate restored him to the pontifical chair.

Immediately after his resumption of office, he caused Peter Kewthur to be fettered and sent to Jahug. Here he was confined in a dungeon and strict order given to keep him without food. Notwithstanding this, the Pontiff's sister in law contrived to convey victuals to him unnoticed. But his benefactress dying shortly after, Peter was left to his fate, and actually perished through starvation, after having held the pontificate ten months.

## IX

Prochoron and the troubles of Constantinople. — Minas of Aguen. — Death of the Pontiff Lazarus. — Minas of Aguen anointed Pontiff. — George appointed Patriarch. — Nalian restored to the patriarchate of Constantinople. — Isaac Abakin elected Pontiff. — He is deposed and Jacob of Shamakhi appointed in his stead. — Simon of Erevan. — His enmity against the Roman persuasion and the alterations introduced in the Armenian Calendar. — Manuel of Baln. — The Patriarchs Gregory and Zachariah. — Lucas of Erzeroum appointed Pontiff.

While the Armenians living under the dominion of Persia were harassed by their Pontiff, the patriarchal see of Constantinople became the scene of discord and confusion. For a Vartabed of Silistria, named Prochoron, having arrived from Jerusalem began to intrigue for the supreme dignity. Having ingratiated himself with three of the most eminent Armenians, he plotted with them to dispossess Jacob Nalian of the patriarchate. For this purpose he made presents to the Vizir and to other dignitaries, and was authorised by letters patent to take possession of the Patriarchal See. This intrigue was kept secret till Easter day; when all the Armenians being assembled in

the church of the Mother of God, Prokhoron entered attended by a large body of Turkish troops, and was proceeding to the interior of the church, when the people astonished at what they saw, rose and exclaimed with one voice that no one but Jacob should preside over their Church. A dreadful riot ensued in which the Armenians were severely beaten by the Turkish soldiers and eventually expelled. Prokhoron was then introduced into the church while Jacob was obliged to retire.

The next day Prokhoron again came to the church and while he turned towards the people in order to harangue them, the people all in one voice began to cry : « Long live our Patriarch ; Down with the intruders. » They attempted also to assault him, but he had taken the precaution to station soldiers in the garb of Armenians amongst the Congregation, who now seeing the tumult interfered and drove the people out of the church. Intelligence of these acts having reached the Sultan, he immediately ordered Prokhoron to be destituted and banished to the castle of Samsoun. This occurred on the seventh day of his patriarchate.

Minas of Aguen, Rector of the convent of St. Garabied in Daron, was then appointed Patriarch, while Jacob Nalian was sent to Brussa, whence, on the death of Gregory

Patriarch of Jerusalem, he was removed to that patriarchate.

At this time, A. D. 1751, the Pontiff Lazarus died in the fourteenth year of his dignity and third of his restoration.

The Armenians then elected in his place Minas patriarch of Constantinople, who immediately went to Etchmiadzin and was anointed supreme head of the Armenian Church. George, a native of Sewnies and a very good man, was appointed Patriarch at Constantinople. During his patriarchate, Yaghub of Aguen, particularly distinguished himself among the Armenians in Constantinople and was admired by all the inhabitants of the city. In a pilgrimage which he made to Jerusalem Jacob Nalian the Patriarch expressed the desire of being reappointed Patriarch at Constantinople. Accordingly Yaghub on his return procured Jacob's restoration to the patriarchate of Constantinople, and George's removal to Brussa, of which church he was appointed bishop. A Vartabied named Theodore, a man of eminent learning and piety, was then appointed Patriarch of Jerusalem.

Minas the Pontiff having held his dignity one year died, A. D. 1754, and was succeeded by Alexander a native of Constantinople, who only enjoyed his dignity eighteen months when he died.



Isaac Ahakin from the province of Khor-tzen was then elected Pontiff. He declined taking up his residence at Etchmiadzin and lived nearly the first two years of his pontificate at Constantinople. Thence he removed to Erzeroum, and continued there for three years. This disinclination of the Pontiff to reside at Etchmiadzin was the cause of his losing the pontificate. For some of his private enemies making this a subject of complaint against him, convened an assembly of the Armenians residing in Constantinople, in which he was destituted. The same assembly elected an individual named Jacob of Shamakhi to succeed him, and one Abraham of Asdabad was sent to Erzeroum to demand of Isaac an account of the manner in which the revenues of the pontificate had been expended since his elevation. On the arrival of Abraham at Erzeroum, he issued a memorandum to be read in the churches of that city, intimating Isaac's destitution and Jacob's appointment. Not many days after Isaac died in a fit of apoplexy in the fifth year of his pontificate.

Jacob of Shamakhi exercised the duties of Pontiff for four years when he died, A. D. 1763. He proved to be an excellent character, preserving peace among his clergy during the whole period of his spiritual sway.

Simon of Erevan was then elected Pon-

tiff. Up to this period none of the Armenian Pontiffs had ever written against the usages of the Church of Rome. Even Lazarus who was so hostile to the interests of the Pope, never attempted to annoy the Roman See by polemical writings after his elevation to the pontificate. Simon disregarding all convenience, declared hostilities and wrote a book against the Roman persuasion. He also made a number of alterations in the Church Calendar, which much disfigured it, and directed it to be thus used in all the Armenian churches. Some opposition was raised at Constantinople against its reception, the Armenians in that city declaring that they deemed it highly criminal to alter that form of worship which had been prescribed and handed down by their ancestors. The more strongly to show their opposition, they reprinted the old calendar and added to it a long preamble setting forth the grounds upon which they acted. In the course of a short time, however, Simon's calendar was used in all the Armenian churches.

During Jacob's patriarchate and before Simon's election to the pontificate, much dissension arose amongst the Armenians in Constantinople, in consequence of the proceedings of a Vartabed named Manuel, a native of Balu, who was a determined foe

to the Roman catholic persuasion. He was twice banished from that city by reason of his turbulence and eventually died in exile.

In the year 1764, Jacob Nalian resigned the patriarchate of Constantinople and was succeeded by Gregory, a native of that city, an individual of distinguished merit. Shortly after Jacob died. Gregory after a few years also resigned and died in a journey which he undertook to Europe. The Armenians then at Constantinople elected Zachariah, A. D. 1772, a native of Gaghzuan and legate from Etchmiadzin, to be their Patriarch. At this period the Pontiff Simon died, after presiding over the Armenian Church seventeen years.

He was succeeded by Lucas from the province of Erzeroum, a person of distinguished merit, who sustained his dignity with great credit to himself and much to the satisfaction of all connected with his Church. This Pontiff being very learned in all theological matters, one Sergius of Tekirdagh, also a noble character, visited him with the object of advising with him about the means of uniting the Armenian and Roman Churches. But some of the clergy of Etchmiadzin, being hostile to the ideas of Sergius, the latter suffered much molestation from them for the space of five years; when, having effected nothing, he secretly fled to Europe.

X

The Mekhitharian Institution. — Death of Mekhithar. — Stephen Melkonian his successor. — Troubles in the Institution. — The Patriarch of Venice interferes. — The principal rioters expelled from the Institution. — Origin of the Institution of the Mekhitharians of Vienna.

The pious and virtuous Mekhithar of Sebaste, the true benefactor of the Armenian nation, having firmly established and well regulated his Institution, fell sick and died April 27<sup>th</sup> 1749. He had the satisfaction to see his work prospering, and the labour of his disciples bearing fruit; their literary productions printed in Venice being spread continually among the Armenians.

The year after Mekhithar's death, his successor was elected in the person of Stephen Melkonian, a native of Constantinople. He governed the Institution for several years with wisdom and paternal care, and in the year 1762 he had the satisfaction to receive a honourable decree from Rome, by which Pope Clement the Thirteenth declared him, as well as his successors, Abbot General for life of all the Mekhitharians.

The calm and pacific state of the Monastery at St. Lazarus was, however, destined to be troubled by the pretensions of two restless monks; who forming a party among their younger brethren insisted on concessions which the Abbot could not grant. An assembly was then held, in which the majority being composed of the tumultuous, the Abbot was forced to resign his authority. This he did under protest.

The Patriarch of Venice being made aware of this unfortunate state of things, through the intimation he received from the agitators themselves that they were about to elect another Abbot, visited the Monastery accompanied by the legal functionaries of the Republic who had already made enquiries and had pronounced against the authors of the disturbance and their pretensions. The Patriarch, however, having re-examined the question and heard all complaints, pronounced judgement in favour of the Abbot. Threatening the insubordinate to visit them with punishment if they persisted in not submitting to the authority of the Abbot, he restored Stephen to his dignity and obliged all the monks to ask his forgiveness. All obeying, peace was again restored among the inmates of the little Island.

This peace, however, did not last long;

for the ringleaders recommenced their contests and pretensions. This coming to the knowledge of the Patriarch and of the civil authority, each sent to St. Lazarus a deputy who summoned the monks to the presence of the Abbot and obliged them to submit; this they did humbly asking forgiveness and promising never more to fail in their obedience. As for the two ringleaders, the authorities being convinced that they would never cease from causing trouble, decided on expelling them from the Institution. This decision was executed immediately; the one, called Minas Kasparian, was accompanied to the frontier as far as Trent; the other, named Asdvadzadur Babigian, was embarked for Trieste; both of them being banished for ever from Venice and from the Venitian territory.

Order thus being again restored, the Republic declared the Mekhitharian Institution to be under its immediate protection.

Babig on his arrival at Trieste, succeeded, with the assistance of some others of the monks, in founding a religious and educational house in that city, and succeeded also in printing some books there. At length, however, he was obliged to retire to Vienna, where he was presented by the Austrian Emperor with a house in which he established himself with his disciples. He

retained the appellation of Mekhitharian for his religious family and pursued the same object of sending missionaries to Armenia.

Babig's foundation exists to this day in Vienna; its members are recognised as Austrian subjects; they are presided over by an Archbishop and possess small branches at Trieste, Smyrna and Constantinople, where they educate youth of all nationalities. They also possess an extensive typography at Vienna where large number of books are printed, mostly however written by Europeans and in the German language.

Thus was Babig's insubordination overruled for good, and the Armenian Mekhitharians of Vienna are certainly not without their utility and influence among their countrymen in the East.

## XI

**Persecution against the Romanizing Armenians. — Changes in the patriarchal authority. — Zachariah attempts to cause a union between the two divisions of the Armenians. — Six conditions. — Opposition of the Roman catholic clergy. — Death of Zachariah. — Daniel his successor. — Death of Lucas the Pontiff.**

During the pontificate of Simon, in the year 1780, Zachariah the Patriarch of Constantinople, commenced a persecution against the Romanizing Armenians, many of whom were sent to the galleys, and not a few died there during their captivity. So great was the Patriarch's intolerance, that he issued an order that no Armenian priest should administer the Sacrament of Baptism to Romanists; their dead also were not permitted to be taken to the burial ground.

Some charge, however, being laid against him, Zachariah was obliged to renounce his dignity and to retire to Brussa, in Asia Minor. John of Hamadan, bishop of that city, was then called to Constantinople to succeed him, A. D. 1782. But this latter being also of a cruel nature, even increased the persecution against the Romanists; many of



them were sent to the galleys, a priest was beheaded, and several renounced the christian faith. John after holding the patriarchate for three months was destituted, and Zachariah was restored to the dignity.

Zachariah on resuming the patriarchal authority changed his policy. He ceased from persecuting the catholic Armenians, and then endeavoured, if possible, to effect an union between the two divisions. For that purpose he invited to his residence twenty of the most important individuals of the catholic Armenians and assured them that if he had formerly used measures of rigour it was only to fulfil faithfully the duties for which he was responsible to the Turkish government, not from spirit of enmity against the doctrines of the Roman Church, for which he had great respect. He, however, had no other object but to restore peace and love amongst the different individuals of the same nation, although they were divided by religious opinions. He then proposed six conditions, the accomplishment of which, he said, would have a pacific effect and prevent further harm to the Romanists.

These conditions were the following:

1. That on fast days they should not publicly eat fish or other marine produce. —

For it is an ancient custom with the Armenians on such days to eat vegetables only, and the sight of open violation of the ancient national custom provokes the multitude to excesses of intoleration.

2. That the Armeno-catholic laity, should cease from disputing upon difficult and delicate questions of religion, such controversy not pertaining to them.

3. That on their meeting Armenian priests of the other persuasion in public, they should treat them with that respect, which is due to all well educated people; not insult them with unbecoming behaviour, as they were in the habit of doing.

4. That they should not frequent so publicly the Latin churches; this having frequently been severely forbidden by the Turkish government; and also that they should not receive in their houses, without due caution, any of the Latin missionaries.

5. That they should celebrate, together with the body of the nation, some of the great festivals which were also observed by the other Armenians, (such as Christmas and Easter); for by celebrating them at other times, they would offer occasion to fanatics to accuse them to the government as plotting with the Europeans.

6. That on festival days they should, at least show themselves in the national church-

ches during divine service and make their offerings; so that they might destroy the already inveterate popular idea, that the Romanists regard the national churches as were conventicles of Satan; although the Holy Sacrament was kept therein, and although they also continually repaired thither without scruple for the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Matrimony, as well as for the burial ceremonies.

The Patriarch then exhorted them to subscribe these conditions and to make them acceptable to those of their own persuasion; promising that they should then be left free to exercise their own rite, and that troubles and enmity should thenceforth cease for ever between the two divisions of the same nation.

The Romanizing Armenians seeing that these conditions contained nothing subversive of the doctrines of their belief, decided to conform to them. Thus they hoped to free themselves from many vexations. The Latin clergy, however, being informed of these conditions and of the decision of the catholic Armenians regarding them, did not find it prudent to permit its execution; and therefore induced the Latin Vicar to issue an order by which no catholic missionary could impart absolution to those of

the catholic Armenians who should follow the counsel of the Armenian Patriarch.

This order produced a crisis; obedience to it naturally caused the continuation of enmity between the two parties. Zachariah the Patriarch, afflicted at his being unsuccessful in his efforts to establish peace and union between the two divisions of the Armenians, convened an assembly at Constantinople, in which he prohibited his congregation from forming matrimonial relations with the Romanizing Armenians. The effect of this was to cause a real separation between the two parties, to the great contentment of the catholic Armenians, who ceased entirely from frequenting the Armenian national churches.

Zachariah having held the patriarchal dignity for twenty six years, died in the year 1799. He was succeeded by bishop Daniel, who had been sent as deputy to Constantinople by Lucas the Pontiff of Etchmiadzin.

In the same year and on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December the death of Lucas the Pontiff also took place, he having presided over the Armenian Church twenty years.

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

I

Daniel of Ashdarag elected Pontiff. — John of Balad sends Daniel to banishment. — Archbishop Joseph. — David's intrigues and appointment to the pontificate. — His tyrannical sway. — John the Patriarch is deposed. — Gregory. — Daniel anointed Pontiff of the Armenians. — Gregory deposed and sent to exile. — John restored to the patriarchate. — Daniel the Pontiff and Gregory the ex-patriarch fall into the hands of David. — Daniel's danger. — The Russian stipulation by which David is deposed and Daniel appointed Pontiff.

Immediately after the burial of Lucas an assembly of the clergy was held at Etchmiadzin to decide upon the nomination of his successor. After much discussion they agreed to appoint Daniel of Ashdarag, who held the patriarchal dignity at Constantinople. A deputation, headed by bishop David of Tiflis, proceeded to Constantinople to acquaint the Patriarch Daniel of Ashdarag with the wishes of the Armenian clergy.

Daniel, on the announcement of the death of the late Pontiff and of his own election

to the pontificate, was willing to quit Constantinople and proceed to Etchmiadzin; but endeavouring to appoint bishop David patriarch of Constantinople and to take his leave of the Congregation, troubles ensued, in consequence of which John, bishop of Balad, having ingratiated himself with several of the principal Armenians, succeeded in obtaining the patriarchal dignity; thereupon he caused Daniel to be banished to the island of Tenedos, accusing him of being the author and cause of the late troubles.

The succession to the pontifical chair being thus impeded, Joseph archbishop of that portion of Armenia which belonged to Russia, saw an opportunity for his own advancement and claimed the dignity of Pontiff on account of his being the senior of the college of bishops of Etchmiadzin. Through the influence of the Russian government he succeeded at length in obtaining his desire. But arriving at Tiflis on his way to Etchmiadzin, he fell sick and died.

In the mean time David, the deputy of Etchmiadzin, seeing the disgrace of Daniel and the loss of the patriarchate, to which dignity he so much aspired, thought to obtain the pontificate of Etchmiadzin for himself. Having ingratiated himself with John the new Patriarch and his friends,

he was sent by them to Etchmiadzin to procure possession of the pontificate, with the promise that he should be recognised so soon as he should succeed.

Being thus supported, David repaired to Etchmiadzin, and having related to the clergy of the Pontifical See all the events that happened during the time of his mission, he acquainted them with the decision of the Armenians of Constantinople, that he should be appointed Pontiff instead of Daniel.

His exertions, however, being, opposed, he availed himself of the authority of the Persian chief of Erevan, by whose means he forced the clergy to anoint him Pontiff of all the Armenians. He began then to exercise the most intolerable tyranny, persecuting all those whom he suspected of being his adversaries, and dissipating the treasure of the Pontifical See. By the despotic exercise of his authority and by his vindictive character, he so much harassed the bishops and all the clergy of Etchmiadzin, that being almost in despair and prevented from flight, they wrote letters on all sides to the Armenians, describing the lamentable condition in which they were compelled to live and beseeching help and liberation from so cruel a tyrant.

At length the Armenians at Constanti-

nople rose to exertion, and finding that John the Patriarch, aided by several of the principal Armenians, favoured David and his adherents, they presented a memorial to the Vizir complaining of the Patriarch who in consequence was destituted and sent in exile to Eudocia.

Gregory, a deputy from Etchmiadzin, was then appointed Patriarch at Constantinople. He was an enemy to David, and therefore sought to favour Daniel, whom the Armenians had elected Pontiff. The new Patriarch immediately applied to the Vizir to confirm that election, and having obtained the necessary letters patent, he sent them to Daniel, who having returned from his banishment, dwelt in Bayezit. Gregory wrote then to the Pontiff of Aghthamar and to other principal bishops and clergy to proceed to Bayezit there to anoint Daniel pontiff of all the Armenians. Thus a large number of the Armenian clergy, hostile to the interests of David, having joined Daniel in the latter place, and the Ritual for the consecration of the pontiffs having been also brought secretly from Etchmiadzin, an assembly was held in the convent called Utchkilissa by which David was judged and condemned, and Daniel unanimously proclaimed and anointed Pontiff of the Armenians.



This, however, was the signal for discord; as the Armenians divided into two factions, each sustaining the one or the other Pontiff. David seeing his authority in danger, by means of bribes obtained the protection of the Persian Government, and obliged Daniel to desist from entering Etchmiadzin compelling him to wait at Utchkilissa for a more favorable moment to proceed further.

In the mean time Gregory the Patriarch at Constantinople by his preaching against and continually persecuting the adherents of David, so much irritated them, that they procured his destitution and exile and the restoration of John, the Patriarch formerly exiled to Eudocia. The consequence was a new persecution against Daniel's adherents, many being fined and others sent to the galleys. Thus David's side again triumphed.

Not content with all this, John procured a decree from government exiling all those who were the cause of the late troubles. Whereupon seizing Gregory, the late Patriarch, who had been exiled to Calcedonia, the ex-pontiff Daniel, and some other bishops, he exiled them to Etchmiadzin; thus putting David in possession of his rival and other adversaries.

David now thought himself secure, and giving loose to that anger which so much

opposition had excited, he treated his rival with every indignity. After keeping Daniel a few months in confinement, he procured an order from the Persian king, banishing the unfortunate Pontiff to the city of Maragha. He then endeavoured to obtain an other order, by which Daniel was to be put to death; but his intended victim was able to escape.

The Russians being at this period at war with the Persians, and being always successful, the Persian Monarch was finally obliged to treat for peace, submitting to all conditions. This was an occasion for the Armenians in Russia to interest their government in behalf of Daniel. Whereupon in stipulating the conditions it was established that David should be deposed, and Daniel the rightful Pontiff be restored to the pontifical chair at Etchmiadzin.

This arrangement was immediately put in execution. David was deposed in the presence of the chief of Erevan and Daniel appointed solemnly and with great pomp to the Pontifical See, in the year 1804. This happy event was communicated to John the Patriarch and to all the Armenians residing at Constantinople, who, recognizing the pontificate of Daniel, order and peace, which lasted for some time, was thus again restored among the Armenians,

## II

**The Greek claims to the Convent of St. Jacob in Jerusalem.**

— Daniel's death. — Ephraim of Ashdarag elected Pontiff.

— Attempt at union between the two divisions of Armenians. — Five theological points. — Result of the attempt.

During the pontificate of Daniel, in the year 1808, the Greeks renewing their old claim to the possession of St. Jacob's convent at Jerusalem, petitioned the Vizir, who favoured their pretensions, but before he was able to act in the matter he was superseded by another. The Armenians then petitioned the Sultan Mahmud for justice. Thereupon he ordered an accurate investigation of the facts to be made, and eventually decreed that the convent in question was a rightful property of the Armenians, was to pertain to them for ever, and that they should no more be molested on that account. This was a national victory to which both parties in Constantinople contributed. For some of the principal Roman catholic Armenians, had much influence at Court; and therefore were invited by John the Patriarch to assist the national cause. Their friendly offices caused the two divisions to re-

gard one another somewhat amicably, and the feeling of dissensions, was, for a time, somewhat allayed.

In A. D. 1809 war again broke out between the Russians and Persians, and Daniel the Pontiff with several bishops were confined, by order of the Persian Monarch, to the fortress of Erevan, lest they should favour the Russians. The Pontiff fell sick and died in confinement. His remains were removed to Etchmiadzin.

On the death of Daniel the clergy of Etchmiadzin having held an assembly, elected bishop Ephraim of Ashdarag, chief of all the Armenians in Russia, to succeed him. Messengers were thereupon despatched to Ephraim, who, obtaining the protection of the Emperor Alexander of Russia, (by whom he was also decorated), proceeded to Etchmiadzin and was anointed Pontiff in the year 1810.

Affairs at Etchmiadzin being now peacefully settled, and the new Pontiff being generally acknowledged by all the Armenians, the nation began to enjoy the benefits of peace. The fact also of the late victorious resistance to the claim advanced by the Greeks, having created a friendly sentiment between the two religious divisions of the Armenians, a certain intercourse was established which led to a de-

sire on the part of the Armenians of Etchmiadzin to effect a union between the two parties; they therefore requested the principal Romanizing Armenians to signify in writing the principal religious points which occasioned their separation.

The Romanists by means of their clergy thereupon presented in writing these five points :

*First, that in Christ there are two natures and two actions.*

*Secondly, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.*

*Thirdly, that the souls of the Saints immediately enter upon the enjoyment of eternal glory, and those of sinners are instantly condemned to suffer their due punishment.*

*Fourthly, that Peter is supreme chief among the Apostles, and his successors possess the same supremacy.*

*Fifthly, that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament of the Church, as stated by the words of St. James the Apostle.*

On receiving these objections, the Armenians of Etchmiadzin appointed competent persons to examine and to answer them, and their reply was as follows.

To the first objection, supported by quotations from St. Gregory the Illuminator,

from St. Athanasius and from St. Cyril, they affirmed the doctrine of *One Nature of the Word made flesh*, according to St. Cyril against Nestorius, who divided them; and also the doctrine of the two natures united indivisibly in one person, against Eutychius who confounded them. They concluded by avowing their entire concurrence in the views held on this subject by the Pontiffs Nierses the Graceful, and Gregory and by bishop Lampronensis.

To the Second, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, they answered by quoting the words of Christ, of Gregory the Illuminator, of St. Athanasius of St. Cyril, and of other Fathers, attesting that the Father is the Generator, the Son is from the Father, and the Holy Ghost from their essence, the doctrine especially taught by St. Gregory the Illuminator, Father of the Armenian Church.

To the third, that the Saints are already in glory, and sinners suffering the pains of hell by their condemnation, they answered quoting from the Blessed Illuminator, from the book of Hymns, and from those of Nierses of Lampron and of other Fathers, proving that the souls of the saints are in glory, and unrepented sinners in the punishment of damnation.

To the fourth, that Peter is supreme

chief among the Apostles, and his successors among the bishops, they answered quoting from the Gospels, from St. Gregory the Illuminator, from Sergius the Graceful, and declared that all the Apostles had absolute authority, and the same authority had also their successors upon their own nation, according to the words of our Lord: « And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. »

And they concluded on this point saying that the successors of the Apostles, being therefore independent of each other, have the same authority and the same dignity which the holy Apostles their predecessors, themselves had, a view supported also by the regulations of the oecumenical councils of Nice and Constantinople.

To the fifth, they answered declaring that Extreme Unction is a Sacrament of the Church, wherefore according to the holy Apostle James, if some one of our congregation fall sick, we call in the ministers of the Church, and recite prayers over him.

But anointing sick people with holy oil, they concluded, is not practised, and is not necessary, according to Khosroes the Great in his book *Commentary on the Breviary*.

These replies were then presented to the Roman catholic Armenians, who after hav-

ing assembled to discuss them, required of those of Etchmiadzin to cease mentioning in the holy sacrifice three names which had been erroneously added in latter times to the calendar of Saints. This being made known among the other Armenians, some individuals ignorant of their own history, pretended the contrary; in consequence of which disturbances ensuing, John the Patriarch ordered that all intercourse and all projects for union should cease, and that each party should go on as before. Thus was the union between the two divisions of the Armenians prevented notwithstanding the strong desire to effect it manifested principally by the Armenians of Etchmiadzin.

### III

John the Patriarch resigns his dignity. — Abraham appointed Patriarch. — He is destituted. — Bishop Paul his successor. — He invites the Romanist clergy to a theological conference. — The Romanist clergy. — Persecution against the Romanizing Armenians. — The four members of the Duzian family. — The order of the Propaganda. — Furious persecution against the Romanist clergy.

In the year 1813 John the Patriarch fell sick, and daily becoming less able to fulfil the duties of his office, the principal



Armenians proposed to him to appoint a successor, lest the national affairs should suffer. He kindly agreed with their wish, and selecting bishop Abraham, a deputy from Etchmiadzin, he resigned his authority and retired to a convent at Chrysopolis, where he remained until his decease in the year 1817.

The new Patriarch Abraham, however, did not long enjoy his dignity; for soon after becoming avaricious, arrogant and irascible, he quarrelled with many of his partisans. Eventually a petition was presented to the Sultan, in consequence of which he was destituted in the year 1815.

The Armenians then elected Patriarch bishop Paul, vicar of Jerusalem, accompanying him immediately to the Vizir, by whom he was invested with the robe of his dignity and sent back to the Patriarchal See in great pomp. This Patriarch remembering the attempt of his predecessors to re-establish religious unity between the two divisions of the Armenians, renewed the attempt in the year 1817, persuading the principals among the Romanizing Armenians, to delegate a certain number of their clergy, to meet as many of the other side, to discuss the points of faith which had caused a separation in the nation, and endeavour to effect that

desired union which would put an end to all dissensions and religious persecutions. This pious wish could not however be realized.

During this time the Romanizing Armenian clergy had notably increased in number. It was composed principally of three monastic orders and of the secular priests, disciples of the Propaganda.

The monastic orders were:

1. The Mekhitharians of Venice, who were reputed for their learning and who were specially esteemed by the Armenians for their patriotic interest in, and accurate knowledge of all that concerned the religious and civil history of their country.
2. The Mekhitharians of Vienna.
3. The Anthonians or Monks of Mount Libanon, who possessed a monastery in Rome.

An Armenian bishop with the title of Vicar, was appointed by the Pope to preside, under the supervision of the Latin Apostolical Vicar, over this clergy and principally over the secular priests pupils of the Propaganda.

Unfortunately a spirit of animosity, whether caused by hostile interests or by envy, we cannot say, has always existed between

these different classes of the clergy, and has on various occasions been the cause of provoking disorders and of prolonging dissensions. And now that the Armenian Patriarch in the execution of his project for promoting a fusion and for checking dissent had invited the catholic clergy to a friendly controversy, it seems that this animosity exercised no small influence in baffling the intentions of the Patriarch. The consequence, however, was a persecution in the year 1819 against the catholic Armenians, the principal victims being four members of the Duzian family, the most powerful and the most wealthy among the Armenian nobles of the Roman persuasion.

These unfortunate men were superintendents of the Imperial Mint at Constantinople, a charge which was hereditary in their family, and in which they had rendered many services to the State. Honour- ed by the Sultan and possessing great influence at Court, they were on friendly terms with all the chief members of the Government. Instigated, however, by some of the Armenians, a Turk, favourite of the Sultan Mahmud, charged them with fraudulent conduct in their official capacity. The Sultan, although friendly to them, in a moment of rage issued orders for their

being seized and executed, confiscating all their property to the royal treasury. These orders were immediately carried into effect, and in the course of a few hours the four cousins were deprived of life and the remainder of the family, males and females, were stripped of all they possessed and sent into exile. Such was one of the consequences of these national dissensions; for although the principal Armenians could have delivered their unfortunate compatriots, yet from fear or from aversion no one moved on their behalf.

The Sultan, however, soon perceived the error into which the iniquity of his favourite had betrayed him, and made such amends as he could; the accuser was in his turn speedily executed, and the survivors of the unfortunate family were restored to their office and property.

This unhappy event put a stop for a short time to the fury of persecution. The unanimous opinion begun to prevail that in order to put an end to these national discords, the clergy of both sides had only fully and openly to discuss the points on which they differed in order to arrive at a community of views and to establish the right belief. That in such case the arms of each side should be the writings of the Armenian Fathers; as it was only by means

of the national religious history, of the national councils, by quotations from the national church books, that the Armenians of Etchmiadzin could be convinced that the pretensions of their adversaries were well founded. And these arms no one could better use than the Mekhitharians of Venice, whose speciality they were. This idea at once awakened such a sentiment of contrariety between the different classes of the catholic clergy as to endanger the execution of the project.

And its execution was indeed prevented; for the opponents of the union succeeded in influencing the Propaganda to forward an order by which all catholic priests were forbidden, under severe penalties, to enter upon any controversial dispute touching the questions that then agitated the Armenian Community at Constantinople. To this order all the catholic clergy were naturally forced to conform themselves; wherefore, Stephen Kiuver, General Abbot of the Mekhitharians of Venice, wrote to his dependants at Constantinople commanding obedience to the order and submission to the Latin Vicar of that city.

This measure could not appease dissensions from breaking out again; and the Armenians of Etchmiadzin in retaliation coerced their Patriarch to cause an edict

of the government to be issued, by which the Latinizing Armenians were sent, some to the galleys, others to exile and their property confiscated. This edict was published in the year 1820, and it affected principally the catholic clergy; many of whom fled to Europe, some concealed themselves in the Latin Monasteries of the city, and others took refuge in the dwellings of the foreign ambassadors, the catholic laity thus remaining deprived of ministers.

#### IV

The three Romanizing Armenians and four of the Mekhitharians. — The Mekhitharian Fathers enter upon a controversy with the other Armenians. — The five points. — Enthusiasm of the Armenians in hopes of a union. — The conclusion of the controversy. — The Document entitled « Invitation to Christian love. »

While things were in this deplorable state, three pious Armenians, seeing that the only means to put an end to the horrors of the persecution were to effect the projected unity through the proposed religious discussion and reconciliation, visited four of the Venitian Mekhitharians who had taken refuge in the Monastery of the Capu-

chins. Having narrated, with tears, the deplorable condition of the catholics, who without spiritual leaders were exposed to torments of proscription, they earnestly entreated them to stop the fury of their persecutors, as was in their power only to do by meeting the principals among them and endeavouring to persuade them to adopt conciliatory measures. The Mekhitharians, however, could not conform to such a wish, impeded as they were not only by the strict order of the Propaganda, but also by that of their own General Abbot. The devoted Armenians, however, continuing their entreaties, the Mekhitharians moved to compassion declared that for the undertaking of such a step there was only one way possible: to obtain permission from the Latin Vicar, to whose immediate authority they were subjected. Rejoiced at such a declaration, one of the three Armenians promised to obtain that permission, and immediately set out for the Vicar's palace. But instead of meeting the Latin he met with the Armenian Vicar, from whom he easily got what he required and gladly repaired to the Capuchin Monastery. The Mekhitharians thereupon, not suspecting the truth of his assertion, and following also the advice of the prior of the Capuchins, who encouraged them to the

undertaking, immediately set out to meet the principals among the dissenting Armenians, by whom they were received with great honour, and with the expression of immense joy. They promised to do all in their power to mitigate the sad condition of the catholics, provided they would endeavour, on their side, to clear up the questions which caused the troubles and to effect a conciliation in the belief of the two divisions.

This they promised, and being protected by the most powerful of their adversaries began without delay their religious conferences. These lasted for about three months, and the points of discussion were the following :

1. Are there two natures, two wills and two actions in Christ ?

2. Does the Holy Ghost proceed from the Father and the Son ?

3. Do the souls of sinners who repenting have confessed their sins, go to purgatory, where they are pardoned through the grace of the holy Sacrifice and then go to paradise ?

4. Is Peter the supreme head of the Apostles, and do his successors possess the same supremacy among the successors of the Apostles ?



5. Is Extreme Unction a Sacrament of the Church, and is it necessary to administer it to those who are on their death bed?

All these points were solved only by the Gospel and by the witness of the writings of the Fathers of the Armenian Church, and the arguments made use of seemingly proved that the doctrines held by the Romanists were the most lawful and their adversaries were therefore obliged to submit.

In the mean time the four Mekhitharians, who were treated with the utmost of honour and respect by all the Armenians, were invited to preach and to celebrate the holy Sacrifice of the Altar in their churches. And it was admirable to witness the enthusiasm that reigned in all classes of the people who expected anxiously the moment of that desired union which should cause all dissensions and troubles to cease for ever. The spirit of conviction as to the right doctrine was such, that the name of the Roman Pontiff being uttered by the officiating priest during divine service, the people present with one accord made the usual response: « *Grant him to us, O Lord, and have mercy.* »

The conferences being over, and all questions being thoroughly and satisfactorily

settled, the Armenian Patriarch caused the result to be published, so that all might know and submit themselves to it. This publication was entitled: « *An Invitation to Christian Love,* » and is one of the most interesting documents regarding one of the most important episodes in the religious history of Armenia, and a translation of which is here given in order to enable the reader to form a right idea of the doctrines which were the cause of so much dispute and enmity between the two divisions of the same nation.

AN INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN LOVE.

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We declare that the holy and orthodox doctrine of the Armenian Church is this:

« Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man; being at the same time Son of God and Son of Man, consubstantial with the Father by his divinity, and of the same flesh with us by his humanity. — *Nierses the Graceful, Pastoral Letters.*

Wherefore we affirm, against Nestorius, One Nature instead of One Personality. Likewise we uphold, against Eutyches, Two Natures indivisible in One Christ, according to the doctrine professed by the holy Fathers and by the Councils.

For we do not divide into two natures and into two persons the One Christ, as did Nestorius, nor do we, as did Eutyches and his followers, alter, blend, and confound two natures in one.

But we accept, as in duty bound, the two natures as expounded by Gregory the

Great, the Theologian, in his letter to Claudius, written in condemnation of the doctrine of Apolynarus and his adherents, and wherein he says, there are two natures; declaring also the reason, « for He is God and man . . . » again he says : « If He was twofold it is evident that he was so by nature and not by individuality. »

As for our upholding One Nature, let not a contrary teaching prevail; such belief being in accordance with the doctrine of the orthodox teachers in the Church, and especially of St. Cyril of Alexandria in confutation of Nestorius, as he writes also in his first letter to Secundus, that we confess, with the Fathers, One Nature of the Word made flesh instead of One Personality.

But we acknowledge that there are two Wills and actions in that Unity, not discordant with one another; the one divine, when He would demonstrate the power of His divinity, the other human when He would manifest His participation in our humanity. — *N. the Graceful, Past. Lett.*

As we believe that a twofold — divine and human — action exists in that Unity, so we accept both these as appertaining to one Personality, now God exercising divine attributes, now as man assuming those of humanity.

We confess the Holy Ghost as of the Father and of the Son; for according to the Blessed Illuminator: « The Father is from Himself; the Son is from the Father, and the Holy Ghost is from Them and in Them. » — *Agathangelus*.

Wherefore we say with Nierses the Graceful: « The Holy Ghost *proceeds* from the Father and *takes* from the Son. »

And we therefore find in the book of hymns: « O Source of our life and salvation, Thou, Spirit of the Father and of the Son. »

As to the future state of the souls of the departed, our belief is according to the doctrine of St. Gregory the Illuminator: « The pure dwell with Christ; for He has said: Where I am there also shall my servant be. » — *John*, xii, 16.

He again says: « When death puts an end to this terrestrial life, the soul is conveyed back to God who gave it, and the body becomes earth whence He created it.

When the souls of the just and pure are liberated from the flesh, angels and spirits of Saints come forth to meet them and to accompany them into the Divine Presence with psalms and praises, exalting the everlasting glory of the Omnipotent and most Holy Trinity and praising the Bountiful Clemency which transfers from the terres-

trial to the celestial state, from abasement to honour, those who are chosen and called to His kingdom and glory. » — *St. Gregory the Illum.*

He also says : « As for those who are strengthened in the holy love of Christ, who have offered themselves to death... they are saved... » and again : « Through the grace of the Holy Spirit, the doors will be opened to the life of beatitude in that celestial abode where doth repose the congregation of the Saints. » — *Id.*

With regard to the dead in venial sin, and to those whose mortal sins have been remitted but who have not accomplished their penance in this world, we offer up prayers for them, saying : « Make them worthy of Thy mercy, pardon and favour. »

We also chant in our litany : « Thou Lord who art the grantor of pardon, take away the sins of our departed ones, and cause them to repose in the royal rest of Thy habitation. » — *Book of Hymns.*

The priest also supplicates in the holy Sacrifice : « Remember, O Lord, and have mercy, and be favourable to the souls of the departed and give them repose and light, and place them among Thy saints in Thy kingdom. ».— *Liturgy.*

For thus our Blessed Illuminator taught us when he said : « As for those among the

faithful who have sinned, but who have confessed and done penance, and having partaken of the redeeming Sacrament have departed from this life, they also shall be remembered through the sacrifice of Christ, and through the prayers and suffrages of the poor, as well as through good works; so that through the piety of the survivors the dead shall be made alive, being renewed and regenerated in everlasting life. »

Wherefore the temporary abode of such departed souls as need assistance from the Church is named by us *Stage* (*հայտն*) and by others *Purgatory* (*քուարքան*).

The impious however, as well as infidels and sinners who die unrepentant, we believe to be immediately damned and thrust into hell; we therefore repeat the words of the Blessed Illuminator: « There is a different place for those who have despised His laws, who have wallowed in the mire of vice and sensuality and have committed every kind of iniquity; their inheritance will be outer darkness. Spiritual blindness in this life is a preliminary punishment for those whose minds and senses are dark with vice; they are estranged from the life of the world to come... and are thrust into the fire of hell where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. » — *Greg. the Illum.*

With regard to St. Peter the Apostle,

he is the chief of the holy Apostles and the foundation-stone of the Church : — thus we sing in our hymns : « Thou who hast appointed to be supreme in the company of Thy chosen Apostles, the blessed Peter, chief of the holy faith and foundation of the Church. » — *Book of Hymns*.

And the blessed Illuminator says : « ... of the Apostles assembled by Christ, the bearer of their crosses, whose chief Peter. » — *Agathang*.

And again : « He made him the corner stone of all the churches. » — *Agathang*.

And as each of the Apostles derived apostolical authority from Christ, so all the seats of lawful succession from the Apostles possess by divine right, and according to their rank and extent, the full authority and jurisdiction of the Apostles, as is imposed by the regulations of the Councils and of the holy Fathers in accordance with the words of Holy Writ : « Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. » — *Matth.*, xxviii, 20.

The Sacraments also of the Church are seven ; one of which, Extreme Unction, it is necessary to administer to the sick in danger of death, anointing them with olive oil blessed by the priests ; and this is done



in accordance with the directions of John the Great, the Philosopher, contained in the II<sup>d</sup> canon of the synod held by him : « The oil for the sick ought to be blessed by the priest, and the anointing should be accompanied by the offering of appropriate prayers, as the Apostle James also prescribes : « Is any man sick among you ? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man : and the Lord shall raise him up ; and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him. » — *St James*, v, 14-15.

V

Consequence of the attempt for union. — Commotion among the lower orders. — The four Mekhitharians excommunicated. — They are absolved by the Pope. — Etchmiadzin conquered by the Russians.

One of the good effects of these conferences was this, that the rigour of the persecution against the Romanists was softened. All well disposed people began to expect with impatience the moment, when the union being effected, all enmity and religious controversies should cease. The four Missionaries also being indefatigable in preaching love and charity, a number of the Romanizing Armenians followed them to the Armenian churches, where they no more heard any thing contradictory to their own religious sentiment and the Roman catholic doctrine. All this, however, was but a superficial success. For the spirit of jealousy and discord was continually working to destroy all good. Some ill disposed fanatics, among the laity as well as among the clergy, instigated the mob against the contemplated union by repre-

senting it quite under another aspect; the consequence of this was a dreadful commotion. The patriarchal palace was taken by assault, and the life of the four Missionaries was, for a moment, in danger. The Latin Vicar on his side issued a decree by which the Mekhitharian Missionaries were excommunicated, and penalties also published for those among the Romanist Armenians who should frequent the Armenian churches.

This changed the face of the enterprise. The four missionaries seeing themselves made an object of aversion in the eyes of the catholic Armenians, and quite unfit for their own office, saw no other means for salvation but by writing to Rome and informing the Holy Father of their undertaking. For they had lost not only the protection of the Latin Vicar, but also that of their own congregation, whence for several reasons, they were expelled. The holy Father on being fully informed of the good intentions of the four Missionaries, sent immediate order to the Latin Vicar at Constantinople to absolve them from any ecclesiastical censure, and to admit them in the church as before. This was done and they were re-habilitated, but they could not regain admittance to the congregation whence they had been expelled. Thus ended

this attempt at the union of both divisions of the Armenians; a union which, according to what the records attest, was sincerely wished for by the Armenians of Etchmiadzin.

After this event, in the year 1823, war broke out between the Persians and Russians, in which the Armenians gave proof of great courage. The Russians being at length victorious, a large portion of North Armenia was annexed to the Russian Empire, and thus Etchmiadzin, the pontifical seat entered under the power and protection of the Russian government, to the great contentment of all the Armenians.

## VI

The last persecution against the Romanizing Armenians.

Paul, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, having held his dignity eight years, wished for a quiet life; wherefore, in the year 1823, he resigned his authority. The Armenians then having consulted each other, they elected a Vartabied of the name

of Garabed, to succeed him. This Patriarch was of a different character than that of the late Patriarch. The irritation also caused among the Armenians by the unsuccessful consequence of the late attempt of union, having caused much excitement, many of the ill disposed individuals instigated the Patriarch to take measures of rigour against the catholics.

About this period the Turkish government was involved in war against the Greeks. When at Navarino, the Turkish fleet being destroyed by the Christians, the Sultan's rage was at the highest pitch. He wished for some occasion to avenge himself against the Christians. This being observed by the Armenian Patriarch, he took advantage of the circumstance to proceed against the Romanizing Armenians.

He petitioned the Sultan, shewing how the Latinized Armenians, being interested for the Europeans, whose protection they also enjoyed, were enemies to the Turkish government, and served as spies to the Latins. Wherefore it was necessary to punish them, to drive them from the Imperial city, and to cause all friendly intercourse between them and the Europeans to cease.

This being suggested to the vindictive spirit of the Sultan, it was not very diffi-

cult to persuade him to issue an order, by which all the Romanizing Armenians were to be immediately banished. This occurred in the year 1827, the 27<sup>th</sup> of December, and the Patriarch receiving full authority, was charged with its execution. The first victims of this persecution were eight of the most important bankers among the Romanizing Armenians, who were originally from Angorah; all their property was sequestered. The Patriarch thought that if he could clear the Romanizing Armenians of the city from all those who were originally from Angorah, the other would easily submit to his wishes. For the former were those who acted with fanaticism and were enemies of any projected union. Wherefore after the first eight were sent to exile, the Patriarch, on the tenth of the following January, called an assembly of all the principal Armenians of both divisions, and read to them the Sultan's order by which all the Romanizing Armenians originally from Angorah, who within fifty years had established themselves in Constantinople, should in the space of twelve days, leave the city and depart for the interior of the country. This was an intimation which no one could resist. They were in consequence obliged to sell, at a vile price, all they possessed, and

to part, escorted by soldiers, for their destination.

The number of these unfortunates amounted to several thousand and comprised men, women and children, people of all ranks and conditions. And what made matters worse was that they were compelled to travel for several days during a most rigid season before reaching their destination. The means of transport were horses, of which only those could make use who possessed money. But of these last also not all could enjoy that advantage; as the number of such animals was quite insufficient.

Thus despoiled of every thing these wretched people left Constantinople and began their journey in the middle of January. Being compelled to travel through uncultivated and inhospitable lands, day and night they were exposed to the intemperance of the season. Many of them unable to bear the fatigue and exposure, and being also deprived of food, died on the way.

The Romanist priests also of the same origin, to the number of thirty two, were banished to Angorah and Adalia, and there placed in confinement. Perhaps they would have there perished, as they were in want even of daily bread, but that some of the

pious among the christians of those places, moved to compassion by their misfortunes, administered to their wants.

Those of Angorah being thus expelled from Constantinople, the Patriarch assembled the Romanizing Armenians, natives of the city, and read them another order of the Sultan by which they were summoned to desist from any religious division, to abandon the Roman doctrine, and to follow that of the Armenians their brethren. In order to effect this injunction of the Sultan, they were ordered to abandon the neighbourhood of the Latins, to give up their habitations in Pera and Galata, and to remove to the interior among the Armenians. Thus all relation with the Latins was to be cut off and they could attend the Armenian churches only. Under such conditions they might remain without molestation, otherwise they would incur the penalties with which government had ordered him to visit the disobedient.

The catholic Armenians of Constantinople obeyed the order of the Patriarch, abandoned their homes in Pera and Galata and settled among the other Armenians. But no force could make them renounce their persuasion. Whereupon the Patriarch caused them to be banished to different places. Many of these unfortunate people seeing



persecution so near their doors, sought refuge in Russia and in other countries and remained there. The remnant of the catholic priests, however, were condemned to perpetual banishment; they therefore took refuge in various parts of Europe, and were hospitably received by the Latin clergy.

Thus the Armenians of Etchmiadzin were victorious in their attempt, and had almost cleared the city from the catholics, whom they had dispersed every where. But this excessive rigor against the catholics could not shake the justice of their cause; they remained faithful to their tenets and were comforted by the courage and abnegation of some devoted priests, who taking their lives in their hands sought them out, visited, and confirmed them in their faith.

## VII

### Emancipation of the Catholic Armenians.

This persecution of the catholic Armenians was the most impolitic proceeding to which the Sultan could have given his consent. The chief dignitaries of his own

religion were contrary to so much rigor; and the victorious arms of the Russians, with whom he was then at war, cooperated in convincing him of the hastiness and impolicy of such severity. He therefore decided to avail himself of the mediation of the Powers of Europe, especially of that of France, and to rescind his decree against the catholic Armenians. This he did by publishing a new edict, enabling the catholic Armenians to return to Constantinople and ordering the restitution of their property; this edict was faithfully put in execution, and the unfortunate exiles, after three years endurance of misery and suffering, were restored to their former state.

But in order to impede any further religious troubles and persecutions, it was decreed by government, that the catholic Armenians should thenceforward form a separate body presided over by a catholic Patriarch of their own choice, and quite independent of all ecclesiastical control. They were left free to frequent the Latin churches, as well as to build new ones, and to perform the religious ceremonies according to their own rites. Thus was the Armeno-Roman catholic church called into an organized and completely emancipated existence.

Eager to avail themselves of the advan-

tages which this happy change in their condition afforded them, the catholic Armenians proceeded at once to the election of their own Patriarch. For this purpose ninety heads of the principal families at Constantinople, together with six priests, held an assembly, at which a Vartabed named Anthony Nurigian, a worthy, pious and wise man, was elected. He had been educated at the Propaganda in Rome where he was then actually living in exile. On his election being notified to him, he was immediately presented to Pope Pius the Eighth, who consecrated him, July 11<sup>th</sup> 1830, archbishop of the catholic Armenians of Constantinople and of the provinces, honouring his chair with the authority and title of *Primate* residence. He was authorised in the same time to consecrate about ten bishops, and to appoint them to as many dioceses in his province as he might judge necessary. He was moreover charged faithfully and scrupulously to observe the national customs in the performance of the sacred rites, the alteration of which had so often been the cause of troubles.

On the arrival of Nurigian at Constantinople the Sultan refused to acknowledge him, declaring his election null, as made without the imperial approval and confirmation. The electors were therefore again

summoned to proceed to a new election to be conducted in conformity with government regulations. A second assembly being held, the choice fell on one Jacob Chukhurian who was elected to be the first chief of the catholic division. He, however, declining to accept charge of ecclesiastical affairs it was established that Nurigian should preside over the Church, while Chukhurian should conduct of the civil government of the nation.

It is not uninteresting to observe that thus from the very outset of the independent existence of the Armeno-Roman Church, the temporal authority was separate from the spiritual and administered by a separate head; one an archbishop primate, and the other a Vartabied of some merit and bearing the title of Patriarch. This arrangement being put into execution, Chukhurian was presented to the Sultan, A. D. 1831, by whom he was invested with the robe of office as civil governor of the catholic Armenians.

This division of the two parties according to their respective rites, put an end to all troubles and persecutions. While the catholics attached themselves strictly to the church of Rome, the other Armenians followed their own persuasion and endeavoured to strengthen the pontifical

authority of Etchmiadzin. All relations between the two parties ceased, and so complete was their mutual estrangement that they appeared to be of totally opposite races. From this time the Pontiffs of Etchmiadzin ceased from all correspondence with the Roman Pontiffs.

THE ARMENIANS OF ETCHMIADZIN.

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VIII

The Armenians of Etchmiadzin. — Bishop John succeeds Ephraim in the pontificate. — Stephen Aghavni is appointed Patriarch at Constantinople. — The Protestant Missionaries and their proceedings. — Change of Patriarchs. — An execution for the Christian faith. — A general assembly at Etchmiadzin by which Nierses the Fifth is appointed Pontiff of the Armenians. — Proposition of the Emperor Nicolas. — Honours conferred by the Emperor upon the Pontiff Nierses.

The Armenians having been thus divided by their spiritual heads into two branches, according to their religious persuasions, lived notwithstanding in a peaceful state, as they were awed by the government; still a spirit of hatred and antagonism existed between them.

The succession of the Pontiffs at Etchmiadzin continued regularly, and without suffering any molestation, under the protection of the Emperor of Russia.

During the last troubles the reigning

Pontiff at Etchmiadzin was Ephraim then a venerable old man; who after having held the pontifical dignity twenty two years, resigned his dignity and retired to the convent of Haghpad, where he died A. D. 1831.

The clergy of Etchmiadzin then elected bishop John to succeed him, and with the consent of the Emperor of Russia Nicolas, he took possession of the pontifical dignity.

It was during his pontificate (1836), that the Russian Government, with the object of uniting the Armenian Church to the Russian, enacted a new regulation in virtue of which its priveleges were almost abolished, and its government was placed under the authority of a new Synod.

The reigning Pontiff weakly allowed himself to be awed into subscribing the acceptance of the new regulation. The remonstrances, however, of the nation, inspired the succeeding Pontiffs with courage to oppose its execution, and incited them to procure its abrogation.

Garabed, Patriarch of the Armenians of the same branch at Constantinople, in the year 1831 resigned his dignity and was succeeded by Stephen surnamed Aghavni. It was during the time of his sway that the American Protestant missionaries founded schools at Pera and Bebek where they

admitted Armenian boys to a free education. Their main object being to introduce the doctrines of their persuasion among the Armenians, they began to teach and preach against fasting and saints-worship, against transubstantiation, the Virgin Mary, intercession of the Saints, and other points of belief of the Armenian Church.

This was observed by the principal Armenians, who having remarked the indifference of the Patriarch, they sent for Jacob, bishop of Marsuan and Amassia, and appointed him temporarily as counsellor to the Patriarch, enabling him to act according as he should see prudent and necessary. His first act therefore was to exile several Armenians whom he supposed inclined to protestant ideas. He then from the altar publicly anathematised Luther and his doctrines. Lord Canning, the English ambassador at Constantinople, complained however, to the Turkish government of these proceedings of the Armenian, as well as of the Greek patriarch who had acted in the same way, and in consequence an imperial reprimand was directed to the Armenian patriarch, while the Greek patriarch was destituted.

Jacob, the Patriarch's counsellor, then charging his superior with being an accomplice of the Lutherans, succeeded in



causing his ejection from the patriarchal chair and in obtaining possession thereof for himself, A. D. 1839. His sway did not last long, as his proceedings brought on him such contempt that he was obliged to resign his dignity in the year 1840, and Stephen was restored.

This unfortunate Patriarch was, however, again destituted in the following year by order of the government, when bishop Asdvadzadur, a native of Constantinople, was appointed to succeed him, A. D. 1841. In the year 1843, an Armenian youth of the name Joachim, — who about four years before had apostatized and become a Mahometan but had afterwards repented and again become a christian, — was betrayed into the hands of the Turks, who tortured him in order to make him once more deny christianity. His parents thereupon had recourse to the Russian ambassador, who directed them to Lord Canning. The latter immediately sent to the Vizir requesting him to release the youth from torture. The Vizir promised the Ambassador to spare the youth's life, yet through the fanatic opposition of the chief Mufti the youth was condemned, and after atrocious tortures throughout which he continued steadfast in his faith, he was beheaded.

Thereupon all the ambassadors at Con-

stantinople protested in the names of their governments, and such was the pressure they brought to bear that the most tolerant laws were enacted and thenceforth every one, Turk or Christian, was enabled to embrace whatever religion he might choose. A notable consequence of this freedom was, that all denominations of Christian could build belfries to their churches, and make use of bells to call the faithful to divine service, a privilege of which the Sultan's Christian subjects had before been deprived.

A year before this event on the death of John the Armenian Pontiff at Etchmiadzin, it was established that the most influential chiefs of the Armenians should be invited to Etchmiadzin to hold an assembly to elect a Pontiff according to the general will of the nation; the election of the new Pontiff was therefore protracted for a year. The various representatives being assembled in Etchmiadzin the assembly was held May 18<sup>th</sup> 1843, and its unanimous choice fell, upon Nierses the Fifth from the village of Ashdarag, bishop of Bessarabia, Crimea and Nakhjuan a man of great repute and talent. His election being notified for the imperial sanction, the Emperor Nicolas invited him to St. Petersburg. In the year following Nierses set out on his way to that city,

where he was received with much honour. After several conferences with the Emperor, the latter suggested the fusion of the Armenian Church with the Russian : « There is one Lord, said the Emperor to the Pontiff, one Faith, one Baptism and one Church ; why then should the churches of Russia and Armenia be divided ? Is there not any possibility for us to be united in religious discipline, in rites and ceremonies as we are one in the faith ? » To which Nierses replied : « Your Majesty desires to effect the fusion of the two churches ; but in what way ? Shall the new serve the old, or the old serve the new ? Which of these two is the rightful and according to the will of God ? » The Emperor remained silent.

At an other time the Emperor wished him to change his cowl for that of the Russian Patriarchs. But Nierses replied that on the day he was consecrated priest he had vowed to enter his grave with the same cowl, and therefore he could not obey his wish. The Emperor thereupon caused him, as a honorable distinction, to wear a cross of diamonds upon it.

## IX

Bishop Matthew appointed Patriarch in Constantinople. — His measures against the Protestant Armenians. — Lord Canning's proceedings. — The Protestant Armenians are reckoned a separate branch. — Establishment of two Councils. — Cardinal Ferrieri Nuncio in Constantinople. — Conference between him and the Armenian Patriarch. — Matthew is deposed and Jacob restored to the patriarchal dignity. — Death of Nierses the Pontiff. — Matthew is elected his successor. — Change of Patriarchs. — The burial of a Protestant.

In the following year, 1846, Nierses took his leave of the Emperor and proceeded with great pomp to Etchmiadzin, being everywhere on his way received with honour by the Russian authorities. Having arrived at Etchmiadzin in the end of May, he was solemnly consecrated Pontiff of the Armenians and entered upon the discharge of his functions.

In the year 1843 the Armenians in Constantinople disliking the conduct of Asdvadzadur their Patriarch, caused him to be substituted by Matthew of Constantinople, at that time bishop of the Armenians in Smyrna. The number of Protestant Armenians had now increased so much, that it began to cause alarm. Matthew caused them

to be counted and found their number amounted to about eight thousand. He then took measures to compel them to re-embrace the doctrines of their Church, and in consequence their number was reduced to about one thousand. He then anathematized the leaders that remained, among whom was a priest, and ordered the Armenians of his Congregation to cease all communication with them. Becoming thus odious to their fellow citizens, they, by the advice of the American Missionaries, complained of the Armenian patriarch to Lord Canning. The English Ambassador having laid their complaints before the Vizir, the latter summoned Matthew, the Armenian Patriarch, to his presence. Matthew hastened to obey the Vizir's order, and having related to him the cause and history of the affair he was directed by the Vizir to justify himself before Lord Canning. The Patriarch being courteously received by the English Ambassador, explained that he had been obliged to pursue the course he had adopted as the Americanizing Protestants preached against and denied even the Sacraments of Baptism and the Communion, Sacraments which had been always admitted by the Church of England itself. On receiving this explanation Lord Canning applauded the

Patriarch's procedure and gave orders that no more such complaints should be brought to his notice. The Protestant Armenians, though after this event their number was still further reduced, yet continued in their efforts to form a separate body and eventually succeeded, by means of the American and Prussian Ambassadors, in obtaining a firman or Imperial decree by which they were constituted a separate branch, free and independent of the authority of the Armenian Patriarch, their chief assuming the title of « Protestant Effendy. »

Matthew after this event continued to occupy himself in promoting the welfare of his Congregation. He instituted schools, built churches and caused an Armenian journal to be printed at Constantinople which still regularly appears under the name of Massis. Being a man of talent and activity he continued to exercise his authority and to execute all he thought useful, without consulting the chief Armenians, as he ought to have done. The latter desiring to have some share in the administration of national affairs, addressed a petition to the Vizir, who issued an order, A. D. 1847, for the establishment of two counsels; one for ecclesiastical affairs to be composed of twelve priests, the other to consist of twenty laymen for civil affairs.

These two counsels, however, were to be presided over by the Patriarch himself.

In the following year, 1848, Cardinal Ferrieri was sent as Nuncio by the Pope to Constantinople, and all the chiefs of the different nationalities were ordered by the Sultan to visit him and compliment him on his arrival. Matthew accordingly visited him and was well received; the Cardinal returned the visit and was received with all honours, the Patriarch himself advancing to receive him at the head of twelve priests and two bishops. This friendly reception caused the Cardinal to propose a reformation of the errors existing in the Armenian belief; thereupon a discussion was opened between the Cardinal and the Armenian Patriarch, in order that the Armenians might prove their creed. The points discussed were those we have explained in the « Invitation to Christian love. » According to the records, the Cardinal was surprised to find how he had been misinformed as to the errors attributed to the Armenians. The principale discussion, however, took place with regard to the supremacy of the Pope. The Armenians said : « We acknowledge and believe the Pope of Rome to be first among all bishops. His right it is to preside in the councils whose members are the bishops of all christian-

ity. We however, maintain that the authority of the oecumenical councils is superior to that of the Pope.»

This discussion lasted for three hours, but had no effect in producing the union of the Churches as desired by the Cardinal.

After this event several of the principal Armenians moved by personal antipathy sought to constrain the Patriarch to resign his dignity. Matthew, however, remained firm, and his adversaries thereupon had recourse to the Vizir, who ordered him to be destituted. This coming to the knowledge of the people, they insisted on and obtained the ex-patriarch Jacob's re-appointment.

In his days, in the year 1857, Nierses the Pontiff of Etchmiadzin suddenly died in the city of Tiflis. He had enjoyed his dignity for fourteen years, all of which he spent in promoting the welfare of his flock. He instituted schools and appointed efficient teachers. He made many improvements in the pontifical residence and increased its revenues. He died at the age of ninety six leaving a honourable name, and was regretted by all Armenians.

The year after his death the national representatives were again summoned to Etchmiadzin and an assembly was held for the purpose of electing a new Pontiff.



Of the three candidates Matthew, the expatriarch of Constantinople, was elected. His election was notified to Alexander Emperor of Russia, who sanctioned it and ordered his Ambassador at Constantinople to inform the Sultan of the election of the new Pontiff and of the Emperor's sanction, and at the same time to request the Sultan's permission to enable Matthew to proceed to the See. This was immediately granted, and the new Pontiff left Constantinople on board a steamer of the Russian navy, offered him by the Granduke Constantine, then at Constantinople. Matthew proceeded to Pothy, whence he reached Tiflis. Thence he proceeded to Etchmiazin, every where on his way receiving the homage of the people.

Before Matthew left Constantinople, Jacob the Patriarch resigned his dignity and was succeeded by George bishop of Brussa, who, unable to allay the continual discords he witnessed among his flock, became so disgusted with his want of authority and influence, that he gladly resigned in favour of Sarkis, bishop of Adrianople, who was therefore elected to succeed him. One of the events of his time was the burial of a fanatical individual among the Protestant Armenians. This person had much irritated the Armenians, by his continually

blaspheming their religion and by calling their churches temples of idolaters. On his corpse being carried out to be buried in the cemetery of the Armenians, the people arose in a body and prevented its burial in that place. The English and American Ambassadors then complained to the Armenian Patriarch but without effect; whereupon they referred the case to the Vizir, who immediately sent a body of soldiers to force the Armenians to bury the corpse in the cemetery. The Patriarch then presented himself at the head of the mob declaring that he was decided to fall at the head of his people in defence of the sacred place, rather than allow its sanctity to be profaned by the burial of such an enemy to their Church. The officer commanding the detachment, seeing the resolution of the people to fight in defence of the place, wisely refrained from proceeding to extremities and referred to the authorities, who at once decided on allowing a separate cemetery for the Protestant Armenians. Thus the tumult was pacified.

After this event a national statute was promulgated for the better government of the Armenians by the patriarchal authority. This occurred on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 1860.

In the meantime Matthew the Pontiff who had proceeded to Etchmiadzin and had

taken possession of the pontificate, continued to exercise the duties of his office with much care and ability, endeavouring to promote the welfare of his people and of the clergy of Etchmiadzin. He, however, could not always content all, and finally a faction was formed with the object of deposing him from his dignity. This danger was, however, conjured by the intervention of the Armenians of Constantinople, and a conciliation was effected between the Pontiff and his antagonists.

Matthew subsequently died in the year 1865, leaving as Pontiff the reputation of a weak and inconstant character.

The Armenians of Constantinople then elected his successor to the pontificate in the person of George of Constantinople, who in the year 1867 proceeded to Etchmiadzin and was anointed Pontiff of all the Armenians. The See still enjoys the benefits of his paternal care and with him our biographical history of the Armenian Pontiffs ends.

As for the Patriarchs of Constantinople, since Sarkis of Adrianople several others succeeded to that charge, but no event of great interest occurred. That chair is at present filled by Nierses, to whom we wish long life and happiness hereafter.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ARMENIANS.

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X

Nurigian. — Chukburian. — The Counsel of Ten. — The first church of the catholics. — Succession of Patriarchs. — The catholic clergy. — The colleges of the Mekhitharians. — The Patriarch Garabied Essayan. — Hassun. — Death of Nurigian. — The Primate Marush. — Hassun appointed at first Vicar, then a Bishop Coadjutor. — The Patriarch Garabied resigns his authority and Hassun assumes the same. — Hassun is proclaimed Primate of the catholic Armenians.

As a complement to the brief account already given of the religious history of the Armenians of Etchmiadzin after the separation, we subjoin a relation of the events that occurred in the Community of the catholic Armenians after their emancipation from the authority of the Armenian Patriarch.

The reader will recollect that when the emancipation of the catholic Armenians was decreed by the Sultan, an order was sent to them to elect from among them-

selves one worthy to be their chief and to be responsible for them to government.

Pope Pius the Eighth hearing of their emancipation, sent his blessing to all the catholic Armenians and wrote to them to proceed immediately to the election of a Patriarch, desiring also to be informed as to the person of their choice in order that he might confer upon him a bishop's mitre.

- Thus both authorities, civil and religious, acknowledged the right of the nation to elect and appoint their own Spiritual and Civil leaders. And it was by the people's own free choice and election that Nurigian was presented to the Pope to be consecrated first bishop of the catholic Armenians of Constantinople.

The Turkish government, however, finding the election of Nurigian defective in form and being therefore unwilling to confirm his authority as Patriarch, the Armenians were summoned to a second election. Thus by the election of Jacob Chukhurian to the patriarchate, the national government was divided; the spiritual was confided to bishop Nurigian, and the civil to the patriarch Chukhurian. A counsel composed of ten members and a chief, chosen among the leading laymen, was to act with the Patriarch and to aid him in the duties of his government.

Thus the religious and civil affairs of the catholic Armenians having taken a definite form, the nation began to enjoy peace. They commenced the erection of their first church, which was shortly after completed and dedicated to the Holy Saviour. Great enthusiasm then prevailed; Nuriagian following the Pope's advice ordered the church according to the Armenian rite, obliging the clergy to fulfil the ceremonies according the national custom. Immense was the joy of the people to see their own national rites performed in the first church built by them, after their long compulsory attendance in the Latin churches which their belief imposed on them.

Chukhurian, the first Patriarch, died after holding the patriarchal dignity two years and eight months, and the Congregation appointed Vartabied Paschal Chukhagian to succeed him. His career was brief. He died A. D. 1835. His successor was F. Gregory Enksergian, a Mekhitharian from Vienna.

During this time the catholic clergy had much increased in number. All those who, during the last persecution, had been exiled or had fled, returned to Constantinople. Among these were the members of three different monasteries, three different systems of education. The scholars of the Propaganda formed a fourth group of lay priests.

Thus the catholic ecclesiastical body was a composition of four different elements, whose opinions and aspirations could not be altogether in unison. All, however, were instructed in the doctrines of the Romish persuasion, wherefore, above all, they were true catholics.

But the spirit of nationality, the sense of patriotism, was a point in which not all, in consequence the diversity of their education, could have the same feeling. Some, who had absolutely devoted themselves to the benefit of their nation, wished scrupulously to maintain Armenian rites as they had come down from their ancestors; no alterations, no modifications, no foreign introductions being admissible with them. This exclusiveness was a matter of complaint and discord between the catholic clergy, and the people could not fail from being influenced by their dissensions.

About this time the Mekhitharians of Venice, who already possessed the sympathy and esteem of the people, began to exercise a greater influence. Two Armenian benefactors had bestowed upon them capital for the erection of colleges, where Armenian youth could receive a free education under their care. One of these colleges had been already in operation in Padua, since the year 1834, and a number of Armenian

youth, taken principally from among the Armenians of Constantinople, were there enjoying the benefits of a free education. The second college was to be inaugurated at Venice in the following year. These were such means as could not but increase the influence of the Mekhitharians among the catholic Armenians, who moreover admired in them the self-denial of true patriotism. So much had the example and activity of that congregation already impressed the nation that a patriotic spirit and enthusiastic desire for general instruction and national progress every where sprung up.

But jealousy was as usual, destined to create enmity between the different elements of the clergy, and to trouble the catholic Armenians by causing divisions among them.

Such was the condition of the catholic community about this time, when the Patriarch Gregory becoming involved in the question concerning the performance of the national rites, and slighting the orders of the Primate Nurigian, the Armenians resolved to destitute him. He was therefore obliged to resign his authority, having held it but eight months and by general consent Garabied Essayan, from the Mekhitharians of Venice, was appointed to succeed him on the first month of the year 1836. He



was the fourth Patriarch, who in the short space of five years had succeeded as representant of the catholic Armenians with the Turkish government.

About this time Hassun appeared on the scene. He was sent to Rome in the year 1825, and having afterwards been admitted as a scholar in the Propaganda, he was consecrated priest and sent to Constantinople in the year 1833, where he took up his residence in the priory of St. Saviour's church. Several of the malcontents among the lay clergy having joined Hassun, they began to intrigue for the possession of the Primate's authority. At length Nurigian having fallen dangerously ill, an order was procured from the Propaganda, which ordered him to commit his authority into the hands of Hassun. This was the first step in his career.

Not long after Nurigian died A. D. 1838. The catholic Armenians having held an assembly in the church of the Holy Saviour, under the presidency of the Patriarch Garabied, Vartabied Marush was elected by general consent the second Primate Bishop. The result of the election was immediately notified at Rome, and the Pope directed the newly elected bishop to proceed to his destination.

Marush on arriving at Constantinople

assumed the government of his Church and appointed Hassun, then still a simple priest, his Vicar. He then established a mutual correspondance with Garabied the Patriarch, and thus the two aged dignitaries endeavoured to promote the welfare of the catholic Armenian Community.

Some time after, Vartabied Hassun taking advantage of the advanced age of the Primate, succeeded in persuading the Propaganda to appoint a Coadjutor Bishop to help the Primate in the spiritual government. The choice of such Coadjutor fell upon the proposer himself; thereupon he was invited by the Propaganda to proceed to Rome, where he was consecrated bishop and sent back to Constantinople with special instructions. This occurrence took place in the year 1842 and as it was done secretly and without the participation of the nation, it afterwards became a cause of trouble and discontent.

Some time after the Patriarch Garabied thought necessary to resign his dignity, when Hassun succeeded in obtaining it and was proclaimed civil Patriarch of the Catholic Armenians in the year 1845.

In the next year Marush the Second Primate Archbishop of the Catholic Armenians died; when Hassun produced a document dating from the year in which

he was consecrated bishop, in force of which, and by order of the Propaganda, he was to be acknowledged the lawful successor of the late Primate.

Since that time the history of the catholic division is a succession of sorrowful events, and it is perhaps wise to defer their narration to a future time.



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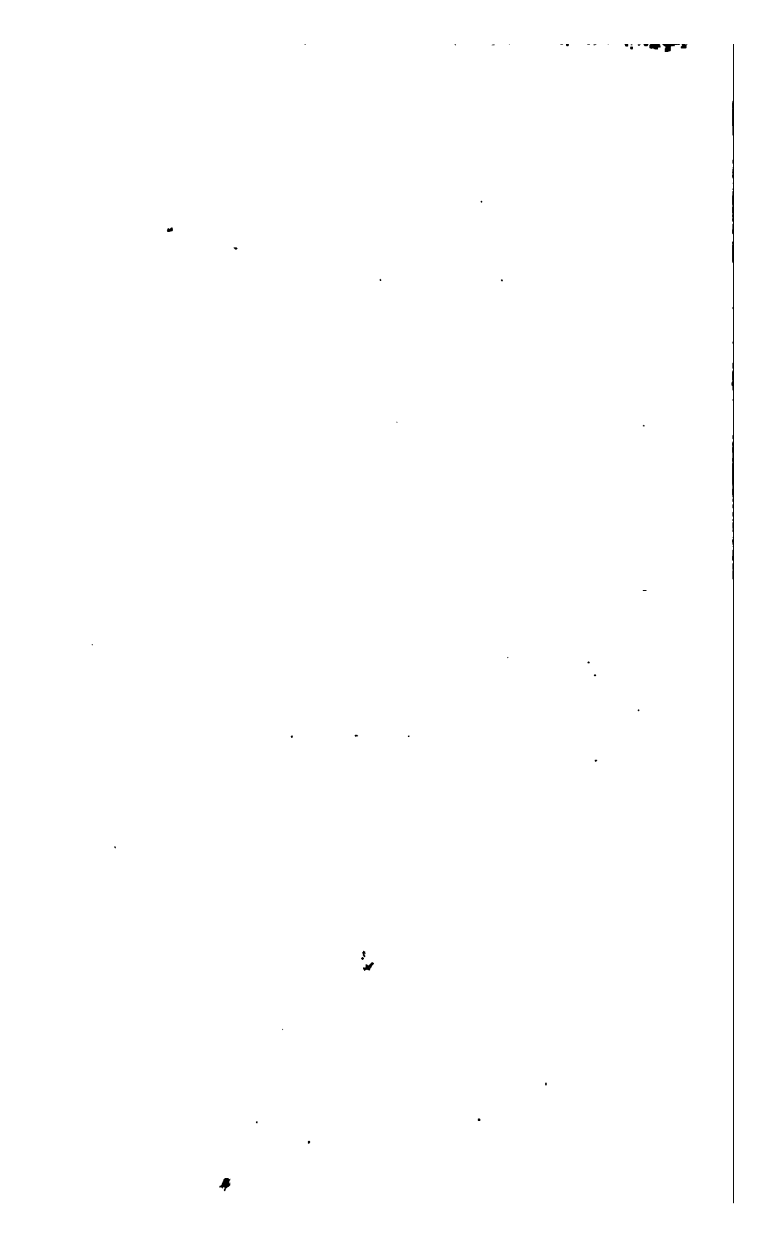
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